AntiCALVIN
Watson's Theological Institutes

Richard Watson

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THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTES

By Richard Watson

Alternative Title:

A View Of The Evidences, Doctrines,
Morals, And Institutions Of Christianity
A New Edition, With A Copious Index,
And An Analysis, By J.

Mcclintock.
Complete In Two Volumes.
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CHAPTER NUMBERING CHANGED FOR THIS DIGITAL EDITION

This is a mammoth document, which as

presently constituted in the Text Version totals 3,871 bytes and 1,018 screen pages of size 12 font in my AmiPro Word Processor program. And, whereas chapter numbering sequences for the 57 chapters of this theology began anew with each of the four Parts of this book in the printed edition, in this digital edition the chapter numbering is in consecutive order throughout the publication, so that no two chapters of this huge document have the same number. This will make it easier for those

using a "Search" or "Find" function with the Text version of the file to quickly locate a desired chapter without any confusion as to what chapter number under what Part has been located. Also, some of the longer chapter titles have been abbreviated below in the Table of Contents so that each listing can occupy but one line. - DVM

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Advertisement To The London Edition

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PREFACE TO THE NEW EDITION

This edition of the Institutes contains the "Analysis" heretofore published as a separate volume. It is also furnished with a pretty copious Index, the want of which has long been felt. It is hoped that the work will be found better adapted, both for students and general readers, than ever before.

Had not the work been stereotyped, the undersigned would have gladly revised the body of the book, especially so far

as to present the Greek quotations in a more correct and sightly form.

J. McClintock

New York,

May 6, 1850

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ADVERTISEMENT TO THE LONDON EDITION

The object of this work is to exhibit the Evidences; Doctrines, Morals, and Institutions of Christianity, in a form adapted to the use of young Ministers, and

Students in Divinity, It is hoped also that it may supply the desideratum of a Body Of Divinity, adapted to the present state of theological literature, neither Calvinistic on the one hand, nor Pelagian on the other.

The reader will perceive that the object has been to follow a course of plain and close argument on the various subjects discussed, without any attempt at embellishment of style, and without adding practical uses and reflections, which, however important, did not

fall within the plan of this publication. The various controversies on fundamental and important points, have been introduced; but it has been the sincere aim of the Author to discuss every subject with fairness and candor: and honestly, but in the spirit of "The Truth," which he more anxiously wishes to be taught than to teach, to exhibit what he believes to be the sense of the Holy Scriptures, to whose authority, he trusts, he has unreservedly subjected all his own opinions.

London, March 26, 1823

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PART ONE: EVIDENCES OF THE DIVINE AUTHORITY OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

01 MAN A MORAL AGENT

The theological system of the Holy Scriptures being the subject of our inquiries, it is essential to our undertaking to establish their Divine authority. But

before the direct evidence which the case admits is adduced, our attention may be profitably engaged by several considerations, which afford presumptive evidence in favor of the revelations of the Old and New Testaments. These are of so much weight that they ought not, in fairness, to be overlooked; nor can their force be easily resisted by the impartial inquirer.

The moral agency of man is a principle on which much depends in such an investigation; and, from its bearing upon the question

at issue, requires our first notice.

He is a moral agent who is capable of performing moral actions; and an action is rendered moral by two circumstances, - that it is voluntary and that it has respect to some rule which determines it to be good or evil. "Moral good and evil," says Locke, "is the conformity or disagreement of our voluntary actions to some law, whereby good or evil is drawn upon us from the will or power of the law maker."

The terms found in all languages, and the laws which have been enacted in all states with accompanying penalties, as well as the praise or dispraise which men in all ages have expressed respecting the conduct of each other, sufficiently show that man has always been considered as an agent actually performing, or capable of performing; moral, actions, for as such he has been treated. No one ever thought of making laws to regulate the conduct of the inferior animals; or of holding

them up to public censure or approbation.

The rules by which the moral quality of actions has been determined are, however, not those only which have been embodied in the legislation of civil communities. Many actions would be judged good or evil, were all civil codes abolished; and others are daily condemned or approved in the judgment of mankind, which are not of a kind to be recognized by public laws. Of the moral nature of human actions there must have

been a perception in the minds of men, previous to the enactment of laws. Upon this common perception all law is founded, and claims the consent and support of society; for in all human legislative codes there is an express or tacit appeal to principles previously acknowledged, as reasons for their enactment.

This distinction in the moral quality of actions previous to the establishment of civil regulations, and independent of them, may

in part be traced to its having been observed, that certain actions are injurious to society, and that to abstain from them is essential to its well-being. Murder and theft may be given as instances. It has also been perceived, that such actions result from certain affections of the mind; and the indulgence or restraint of such affections has therefore been also regarded as a moral act. Anger, revenge, and cupidity, have been deemed evils as the sources of injuries of various kinds;

and humanity, self-government, and integrity, have been ranked among the virtues; and thus both certain actions, and the principles from which they spring, have, from, their effect upon society, been determined to be good or evil.

But it has likewise been observed by every man, that individual happiness, as truly as social order and interests, is materially affected by particular acts, and by those feelings of the heart which give rise to them; as for instance, by

anger, malice, envy, impatience, cupidity, &c; and that whatever civilized men in all places and in all ages have agreed to call Vice, is inimical to health of body, or to peace of mind, or to both. This, it is true, has had little influence upon human conduct; but it has been acknowledged by the poets, sages, and satirists of all countries, and is adverted to as matter of universal experience. While therefore, there is in the moral condition and habits of man something which propels him to vice,

unconnected by the miseries which it never fails to inflict, there is also something in the constitution of the human soul which renders vice subversive of its happiness, and something in the established law and nature of things, which renders vice incompatible with the collective interests of men in the social state.

Let that then be granted by the Theist which he cannot consistent deny, the existence of a Supreme Creator, of infinite power, wisdom, goodness, and

justice, who has both made men and continues to govern them; and the strongest presumption is afforded by the very constitution of the nature of man, and the relations established among human affairs, which with so much constancy dissociate happiness from vicious passions, health from intemperance, the peace, security, and improvement of society from violence and injustice, - that the course of action which best secures human happiness, has the sanction of His will, or in other words that He,

by these circumstances, has given his authority in favor of the practice of virtue, and opposed it to the practice of vice. (1)

(1) "As the manifold appearances of design and of final causes, in the destitution of the world, prove it to be the work of an intelligent mind; so the particular final causes of pleasure and pain, distributed among his creatures, prove that they are under his government-what may be called his natural government of creatures endued with

sense and reason. This, however, implies somewhat more than seems usually attended to when we speak of God's natural government of the world. It implies government of the very same kind with that which a master exercises over his servants, or a civil magistrate over his subjects." - Bishop Butler.) But though that perception of the difference of moral actions which is antecedent to human laws, must have been strongly confirmed by these facts of experience, and by such observations,

we have no reason to conclude that those rules by which the moral quality of action has in all ages, been determined, were formed solely from a course of observation on their tendency to promote or obstruct human happiness; because we cannot collect either from history or tradition, that the world was ever without such rules, though they were often warped and corrupted. The evidence of both, on the contrary, shows, that so far from these rules having originated from observing

what was injurious and what beneficial to mankind, there has been, among almost all nations, a constant reference to a declared will of the Supreme God, or of supposed deities, as the rule which determines the good or the evil of the conduct of men; which will was considered by them as a law, prescribing the one and restraining the other under the sanction, not only of our being left to the natural injurious consequences of vicious habit and practice in the present life, or of

continuing to enjoy the benefits of obedience in personal and social happiness here; but of positive reward and positive punishment in a future life.

Whoever speculated on the subject of morals and moral obligation in any age, was previously furnished with these general notions and distinctions. They were in the world before him; and if all tradition be not a fable, if the testimony of all antiquity, whether found in poets or historians, be not

delusive, they were in the world in those early periods when the great body of the human race remained near the original seat of the parent families of all the modern and now widely extended nations of the earth; and in those early periods they were not regarded as distinctions of mere human opinion and consent, but were invested with a Divine authority.

We have then before us two presumptions, each of great weight, FIRST, that those actions which among men have almost

universally been judged good, have the implied sanction of the will of our wise and good Creator being found in experience, and by the constitution of our nature and of human society, most conducive to human happiness. And, SECOND, that they were originally in some mode or other prescribed and enjoined as his law, and their contraries prohibited.

If therefore there is presumptive evidence of only ordinary strength, that the rule by which our actions are determined to

be good or evil is primarily a law of the Creator, we are all deeply interested in ascertaining where that law exists in its clearest manifestation. For ignorance of the law, in whole or in part, will be no excuse for disobedience, if we have the opportunity of acquainting ourselves with it; and an accurate acquaintance with the rule may assist our practice in cases of which human laws take no cognizance, and which the willfully corrupted general judgment of mankind may have darkened. And should

it appear either that in many things we have offended more deeply than we suspect, whether willfully or from an evitable ignorance; or that, from some common accident which has befallen our nature, we have lost the power of entire obedience without the use of new and extraordinary means, the knowledge of the rule is of the utmost consequence to us, because by it we may be enabled to ascertain the precise relation in which we stand to God our Maker; the dangers we have incurred; and the

means of escape, if any have been placed within our reach.

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02 THE RULE WHICH DETERMINES THE QUALITY OF MORAL ACTIONS, MUST BE PRESUMED TO BE MATTER OF REVELATION FROM GOD

It is well observed by a judicious writer, that "all the distinctions of good and evil refer to some principle above ourselves;

for, were there no Supreme Governor and Judge to reward and punish, the very notions of good and evil would vanish away: they could not exist in the minds of men, if there were not a Supreme Director to give laws for the measure thereof." (Ellis's Knowledge of Divine Things, &c.)

If we deny the existence of a Divine law obligatory upon men, we must deny that the world is under Divine government, for government without rule or law is a solecism; and to deny the Divine

government, would leave it impossible for us to account for that peculiar nature which has been given to man, and those relations among human concerns and interests to which we have adverted, and which are so powerfully affected by our conduct:- certain actions and habits which almost all mankind have agreed to call good, being connected with the happiness of the individual, and the well-being of society; and so on the contrary. This too has been matter of uniform and constant experience from

the earliest ages, and warrants therefore the conclusion, that the effect arises from original principles and a constitution of things which the Creator has established. Nor can any reason be offered why such a nature should be given to man, and such a law impressed on the circumstances and beings with which he is surrounded, except that both had an intended relation to certain courses of action as the sources of order and happiness, as truly as there was an

intended relation between the light and the eye which is formed to receive its rays.

But as man is not carried to this course of action by physical impulse or necessity: as moral conduct supposes choice and therefore instruction, and the persuasion of motives arising out of it; the benevolent intention of the Creator as to our happiness could not be accomplished without instruction, warning, reward, and punishment; all of which necessarily imply

superintendence and controller, in other words, a moral government. The creation therefore of a being of such a nature as man, implies Divine government, and that government a Divine law.

Such a law must be the subject of Revelation. Law is the will of a superior power: but the will of a superior visible power cannot be known without some indication by words or signs, in other terms, without a revelation; and much less the will of an invisible power, of an order

superior to our own, and confessedly mysterious in his mode of existence, and the attributes of his nature.

Again, the will of a superior is not in justice binding until, in some mode, it is sufficiently declared; and the presumption, therefore, that God wills the practice of any particular course of action, on the part of his creatures, establishes the farther presumption, that of that will there has been a manifestation; and the more so if there is reason to suppose that any penalty of a serious nature has

been attached to disobedience.

The revelation of this will or law of God may be made either by action, from which it is to be inferred; or by direct communication in language. Any indication of the moral perfections of God, or of his design informing moral beings, which the visible creation presents to the mind; or any instance of his favor or displeasure toward his creatures clearly and frequently connected in his administration with any

particular course of conduct, may be considered as a revelation of his will by action; and is not at all inconsistent with a farther revelation by the direct means of language.

The Theist admits that a revelation of the will of God has been made by significant actions, from which the duty of creatures is to be inferred, and contends that this is sufficient. "They who never heard of any external revelation, yet if they knew from the nature of things what is fit for them to do,

they know all that God will or can require of them." (2) (2) Christianity as Old as the Creation, p. 233. - "By employing our reason to collect the will of God from the fund of our nature, physical and moral, we may acquire not only a particular knowledge of those laws which are deducible from them, but a general knowledge of the manner in which God is pleased to exercise his supreme powers in this system." (Bolingbroke's Works, vol. v, p. 100.)

They who believe that the Holy Scriptures contain a revelation of God's will, do not deny that indications of his will have been made by action; but they contend that they are in themselves imperfect and insufficient, and that they were not designed to supersede a direct revelation. They hold also, that a direct communication of the Divine will was made to the progenitors of the human race, which received additions at subsequent periods, and that the whole was at length embodied in

the book called, by way of eminence, "The Bible."

The question immediately before us is, on which side there is the strongest presumption of truth.

Are there, in the natural works of God, or in his manner of governing the world, such indications of the will of God concerning us, as can afford sufficient direction in forming a perfectly virtuous character, and sufficient information as to the means by which it is to be effected? We may try this

question by a few obvious instances.

The Theist will himself acknowledge, that temperance, justice, and benevolence, are essential to moral virtue. With respect to the first, nothing appears in the constitution of nature, or in the proceedings of the Divine administration, to indicate it to be the will of God that the appetites of the body should be restrained within the rules of sobriety, except that, by a connection which has been established by him, the excessive

indulgence of those appetites usually impairs health. If therefore we suppose this to amount to a tacit prohibition of excess, it still leaves those free from the rule whose firm constitutions do not suffer from intemperate gratifications; it gives one rule for the man of vigorous, and another for the man of feeble health; and it is no guard against that occasional insobriety which may be indulged in without obvious danger to health, but which nevertheless may be excessive in degree though

occasional in recurrence. The rule is therefore imperfect.

Nor are the obligations of justice in this way indicated with adequate clearness. Acts of injustice are not like acts of excessive intemperance, punishable in the ordinary course of providence by pain and disease and premature death, as their natural general consequences; nor, in most instances, by any other marked infliction of the Divine displeasure in the present life. From their

injurious effects upon society at large, indications of the will of God respecting them may doubtless be inferred, but such effects arise out of the grosser acts of fraud and rapine; those only affect the movements of society, (which goes on without being visibly disturbed by the violations of the nicer distinctions of equity which form an essential part of virtue.) and never fail to degrade and corrupt individual character. Rules of justice, therefore, thus indicated, would, like those

of temperance, be very imperfect.

The third branch of virtue is benevolence, the disposition and the habit of doing good to others.

But in what manner except by revelation are the extent and the obligation of this virtue to be explained? If it be said, that "the goodness of God himself as manifested in creation and providence presents so striking an example of beneficence to his creatures, that his will, as to the cultivation of this virtue, may be

unequivocally inferred from it," we cannot but perceive, that this example itself is imperfect, unless other parts of the Divine conduct be explained to us as the Scriptures explain them. For if we have manifestations of his goodness, we see also fearful proofs of his severity. Such are the permission of pestilence, earthquakes, inundations: and the infliction of pain and death upon all men, even upon infants and unsinning animals. If the will of God in favor of beneficent actions is to be

inferred from the pleasure which is afforded to those who perform them, it is only indicated to those to whom a beneficent act gives pleasure, and its non-performance pain; and it cannot therefore be at all apprehended by those who by constitution are obdurate, or by habit selfish. The rule would therefore be uncertain and dark, and entirely silent as to the extent to which beneficence is to be carried, and whether there may not be exceptions to its exercise as to individuals, such as

enemies, vicious persons, and strangers.

Whatever general indications there may be in the acts of God, in the constitution of human nature, or in the relations of society, that some actions are according to the will of God, and therefore good, and that others are opposed to his will, and therefore evil; it follows then, that they form a rule too vague in itself, and too liable to different interpretations, to place the conduct of men under adequate regulation, even

in respect of temperance, justice, and beneficence. But if these and other virtues, in their nicest shades, were indicated by the types of nature, and the manifestations of the will of God in his moral government, these types and this moral government are either entirely silent, or speak equivocally as to subjects of vital importance to the right conduct and effectual moral control, as well as to the hopes and the happiness of man.

There is no indication, for instance, in either nature

or providence that it is the will of God that his creatures should worship him; and the moral effects of adoration, homage, and praise, on this system, would be lost. There is no indication that God will be approached in prayer, and this hope and solace of man is unprovided for. Nor is there a sufficient indication of a future state of rewards and punishment; because there is no indubitable declaration of man's immortality, nor any facts and principles so obvious as to enable us confidently

to infer it. All observation lies directly against the doctrine of the immortality of man. He dies, and the probabilities of a future life which have been established upon the unequal distribution of rewards and punishments in this life, and the capacities of the human soul, are a presumptive evidence which has been adduced, as we shall afterward show, only by those to whom the doctrine had been transmitted by tradition, and who were therefore in possession of the idea; and, even then, to

have any effectual force of persuasion, they must be built upon antecedent principles furnished only by the revelations contained in Holy Scripture. Hence some of the wisest heathens, who were not wholly unaided in their speculations on these subjects by the reflected light of those revelations, confessed themselves unable to come to any satisfactory conclusion. The doubts of Socrates, who expressed himself the most hopefully of any on the subject of a future life, are well known; and

Cicero, who occasionally expatiates with so much eloquence on this topic, shows by the skeptical expressions which he throws in, that his belief was by no means confirmed. (3), If, therefore, without any help from direct or traditional instruction, we could go as far as they, it is plain that our religious system would be deficient in all those motives to virtue which arise from the doctrines of man's accountability and a future life, and in that moral control which such doctrines exert: the

necessity of which for the moral government of the world is sufficiently proved, by the wickedness which prevails even where these doctrines are fully taught.

(3) So in his Tusc. Quest. 1, he says, "Expone igitur, nisi molestum est, primum animos, si potes, remanere post mortem; tum si minus id obtintbis (est enim arduum,) docebis carere omni malo mortem. Show me first, if you can, and if it be not too troublesome, that souls remain after death; or if you cannot

prove that, (for it is difficult,) declare how there is no evil in death."

Still farther, there is nothing in those manifestations of God and of his will, which the most attentive contemplatist can be supposed to collect from his natural works and from his sovereign rule, to afford the hope of pardon to anyone who is conscious of having offended him, or any assurance of felicity in a future state, should one exist.

Some consciousness of offence is felt by every

man; and though; he should not know the precise nature or extent of the penalty attached to transgression, he has no reason to conclude that he is under a mild and fondly merciful government, and that therefore his offences will in coarse be forgiven. All observation and experience lie against this; and the case is the more alarming to a considerate mind, that so little of the sad inference that the human race is under a rigorous administration, depends upon reasoning and opinion: it is fact of

common and daily observation.

The minds of men are in general a prey to discontent and care, and are agitated by various evil passions. The race itself is doomed to wasting labors of the body or the mind, in order to obtain subsistence. Their employments are for the most part low and groveling, in comparison of the capacity of the soul for intellectual pleasure and attainments. The mental powers, though distributed with great equality among the various classes of men,

are only in the case of a few individuals ever awakened. The pleasures most strenuously sought are therefore sensual, degrading, and transient. Life itself, too, is precarious: infants suffer and die, youth is blighted, and thus by far the greater part of mankind is swept away before the prime of life is attained.

Casualties, plagues, famines, floods, and war, carry on the work of destruction. In the majority of states the poor are oppressed, the rich are

insecure, private wrong is added to public oppression, widows are wronged, orphans are deprived of bread, and the sick and aged are neglected. The very religions of the world have completed human wretchedness by obdurating the heart, by giving birth to sanguinary superstitions, and by introducing a corruption of morals destructive of the very elements of well-ordered society. Part of these evils are permitted by the Supreme Governor, and part inflicted, either by connecting them as

consequents to certain actions, or to the constitution of the natural world more immediately; but, whether permitted or inflicted, they are punitive acts of his administration, and present him before us, notwithstanding innumerable instances of his benevolence, as a Being of "terrible majesty." (4)

(4) "Some men seem to think the only character of the Author of nature to be that of simple absolute benevolence. There may possibly be in the creation, beings, to whom he manifests himself under

this most amiable of all characters, for it is the most amiable, supposing it not, as perhaps it is not, incompatible with justice; but he manifests himself to us as a righteous Governor. He may consistently with this be simply and absolutely benevolent; but he is, for he has given us a proof in the constitution and conduct of the world that he is, a Governor over servants, as he rewards and punishes us for our actions." (Butler's Analogy,) To remove in part the awful mystery which overhangs such an

administration, the most sober Theists of former times, differing from the horde of vulgar blasphemers and metaphysical Atheists who have arisen in our own day, have been ready to suppose another state of being, to which the present has respect, and which may discover some means of connecting this permission of evil, and this infliction of misery, (often on the apparently innocent,) with the character of a Governor of perfect wisdom, equity, and goodness. But in proportion as any one feels

himself obliged to admit and to expect a state of future existence, he must feel the necessity of being assured, that it will be a felicitous one. Yet should he be conscious of frequent transgressions of the Divine law; and at the same time see it demonstrated by facts occurring daily, that in the present life the government of God is thus rigorous, the only fair conclusion to which he can come is, that the Divine government will be conducted on precisely the same principles in another, for an infinitely perfect

being changes not. Farther discoveries may then be made; but they may go only to establish this point, that the apparent severity of his dispensations in the present life are quite consistent with justice, and even the continued infliction of punishment with goodness itself, because other moral agents may be benefited by the example.

The idea of a future life does not therefore relieve the case. If it be just that man should be punished here, it may be required by

the same just regard to the principles of a strictly moral government, that he should be punished hereafter.

If then we are offenders against the Majesty of so dread a being, as the actual administration of the world shows its Governor to be, it is in the highest degree necessary, if there be in him a disposition to forgive our offences, that we should be made acquainted with it, and with the means and conditions upon which his placability can become available to us. If he is not

disposed to forgive, we have the greatest cause for alarm; if an inclination to forgive does exist in the Divine Mind, there is as strong a reason to presume that it is indicated to us somewhere, as that the law under which we are placed should have been expressly promulgated; and especially if such a scheme of bestowing pardon has been adopted as will secure the ends of moral government, and lead to our future obedience, the only one which we can conceive to be worthy of God.

Now it is not necessary to prove at length, what is so obvious if we had no method of knowing the will and purposes of God; but by inferring them from his works and his government, we could have no information as to any purpose in the Divine Mind to forgive his sinning creatures.

The Theist, in order to support this hope, dwells upon the proofs of the goodness of God with which this world abounds, but shuts his eyes upon the demonstrations of his

severity; yet these surround him as well as the other, and the argument from the severity of God is as forcible against pardon, as the argument from his goodness is in its favor. At the best it is left entirely uncertain; a ground is laid for heartrending doubts, and fearful anticipations; and, for anything he can show to the contrary, the goodness which God has displayed in nature and providence may only render the offence of man more aggravated, and serve to strengthen the presumption against the

forgiveness of a willful offender, rather than afford him any reason for hope.

The whole of this argument is designed to prove, that had we been left, for the regulation of our conduct, to infer the will and purposes of the Supreme Being from his natural works, and his administration of the affairs of the world, our knowledge of both would have been essentially deficient; and it establishes a strong presumption in favor of a direct revelation from God to his creatures,

that neither his will concerning us, nor the hope of forgiveness, might be left to dark and uncertain inference, but be the subjects of an express declaration.

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03 FARTHER PRESUMPTION OF A DIRECT REVELATION FROM THE WEAKNESS AND CORRUPTION OF HUMAN REASON, AND THE WANT OF AUTHORITY IN

MERELY HUMAN OPINIONS

If we should allow that a perfect reason exercised in contemplating the natural works of God and the course of his moral government, might furnish us, by means of an accurate process of induction, with a sufficient rule to determine the quality of moral actions, and with sufficient motives to obedience, yet the case would not be altered; for that perfect reason is not to be found among men. It would be useless to urge upon those

who deny the doctrine of Scripture, as to the fall of man, that his understanding and reason are weakened by the deterioration of his whole intellectual nature. But it will be quite as apposite to the argument to state a fact not to be controverted, that the reasoning powers of men greatly differ in strength; and that from premises, which all must allow to be somewhat obscure, different inferences would inevitably, be drawn.

Either then the Divine law would be what every man might take it to be, and, by consequence, a variable rule, a position which cannot surely be maintained; or many persons must fail of duly apprehending it. And though in this case it should be contended, that he is not punishable who obeys the law as far as he knows it, yet surely the ends of a steady and wisely formed plan of general government would on this ground be frustrated. The presumption here also must therefore be in favor

of an express declaration of the will of God in terms which the common understandings of men may apprehend, as the only means by which sufficient moral direction can be given, and effectual control exerted.

The notion, that by rational induction the will of God may be inferred from his acts in a sufficient degree for every purpose of moral direction, is farther vitiated by its assuming that men in general are so contemplative in their habits as to pursue such

inquiries with interest; and so well disposed as in most cases to make them with honesty. Neither of these is true.

The mass of mankind neither are, nor ever have been, contemplative, and must therefore, if not otherwise instructed, remain ignorant of their duty; for questions of virtue, morals, and religion, as may be shown from the contentions of the wisest of men, do not for the most part lie level to the minds of the populace without a revelation. (5) "If

philosophy had gone farther than it did, and from undeniable principles given us ethics in a science, like mathematics, in every part demonstrable, this yet would not have been so effectual to man in this imperfect state, nor proper for the cure. The greatest part of mankind want leisure or capacity for demonstration, nor can carry a train of proofs, which in that way they must always depend upon for conviction, and cannot be required to assent to till they see the demonstration. Wherever

they stick, the teachers are always put upon proof, and must clear the doubt by a thread of coherent deductions from the first principle, how long or how intricate soever that be. And you may as soon hope to have all the day laborers and tradesmen, the spinsters and dairy maids, perfect mathematicians, as to have them perfect in ethics this way: having plain commands is the sure and only course to bring them to obedience and practice: the greatest part cannot know, and therefore they must believe. And I

ask, whether one coming from heaven in the power of God, in full and clear evidence and demonstration of miracles, giving plain and direct rules of morality and obedience, be not likelier to enlighten the bulk of mankind, and set them right in their duties, and bring them to do them, than by reasoning with them from general notions and principles of human reason?" (Locke's Reasonableness of Christianity.) It is equally a matter of undoubted fact, that in all questions of

morals which restrain the vices, passions, and immediate interests of men, conviction is generally resisted, and the rule is brought down to the practice, rather than the practice raised to the rule; so that the most flimsy sophisms are admitted as arguments, and principles the most lax displace those of rigid rectitude and virtue. This is matter of daily observation and cannot be denied. The irresistible inference from this is, that at least, the great body of mankind, not being accustomed to

intellectual exercises; not having even leisure for them on account of their being doomed to sordid labors; and not being disposed to conduct the investigation with care and accuracy, would never become acquainted with the will of the Supreme Governor, if the knowledge of it were only to be obtained from habitual observation and reasoning. - Should it be said, "that the intellectual and instructed part of mankind ought to teach the rest," it may be replied, that even that would be difficult,

because their own knowledge must be communicated to others by the same process of difficult induction through which they attain it themselves, or rational conviction could not be produced in the minds of the learners. The task would therefore be hopeless as to the majority, both from their want of time and intellectual capacity. But, if practicable, the Theistical system has no provision for such instruction. It neither makes it the duty of some to teach, nor of others to

learn. It has no authorized teachers; no day of rest from labor, on which to collect the auditors; no authorized religious ordinances by which moral truth may he brought home to the ears and the hearts of men: and if it had its best knowledge being rather contained in diffuse and hesitating speculation, than concentrated in maxims and first principles, embodied in a few plain words, which at once indicate some master mind fully adequate to the whole subject, and suddenly irradiate the

understandings of the most listless and illiterate, - it would be taught in vain.

Let us however suppose the truth discovered, the teachers of it appointed, and days for the communication of instruction set apart. With what authority would those teachers be invested?

They plead no commission from Him whose will they affect to reach, and they work no miracle; in confirmation of the truth of their doctrine. That doctrine cannot, from the nature of things, be

mathematically demonstrated so as to enforce conviction, and it would therefore be considered, and justly considered, as the opinion of the teacher, and nothing but an opinion, to which every one might listen or not without any consciousness of violating an obligation, and which every one might and would receive as his own judgment agreed with or dissented from his unauthorized teacher, or as his interests and passions might commend or

disparage the doctrine so taught,

(6) Let it be granted, (though not true,) that all the moral precepts of the Gospel were known by somebody or other, among mankind before. But where, or how, or of what use, is not considered.

Suppose they may be picked up here and there; some from Solon, and Bias, in Greece; others from Tully, in Italy, and, to complete the work, let Confucius as far as China be consulted, and Anacharsis the Scythian

contribute his share. What will all this do to give the world a complete morality that may be to mankind the unquestionable rule of life and manners? What would this amount to toward being a steady rule, a certain transcript of a law that we are under? Did the saying of Aristippus or Confucius give it an authority? Was Zeno a lawgiver to mankind? If not what he or any other philosopher delivered was but a saying of his. Mankind might hearken to it, or reject it, as they pleased, or as it suited their

interest, passions, principles, or humors:- they were under no obligation: the opinion of this or that philosopher was of no authority." (Locke's Reasonableness &c.)

"The truths which the philosophers proved by speculative reason were destitute of some more sensible authority to back them; and the precepts which they laid down, how reasonable soever in themselves, seemed still to want weight, and to be no

more than precepts of men." Dr. Sam. Clarke.

Facts are sufficiently in proof of this. The sages of antiquity were moral teachers; they founded schools; they collected disciples; they placed their fame in their wisdom; yet there was little agreement among them, even upon the first principles of religion and morals; and they neither generally reformed their own lives, nor those of others. This is acknowledged by Cicero: "Do you think that these things had any influence

upon the men (a very few excepted,) who thought and wrote and disputed about them? Who is there of all the philosophers, whose mind, life, and manners, were conformable to right reason? Who ever made his philosophy the law and rule of his life, and not a mere show of his wit and parts? Who observed his own instructions, and lived in obedience to his own precepts? On the contrary, many of them were slaves to filthy lusts, many to pride many to covetousness," &c.

(7) Sed haec eadem num censes apud eos ipsos valere, nisi admodum pauccs, a quibus inventa, disputata, conscripta sunt? Quotas enim quisque philosophorum invenitur, qni sit ita moratus, ita animo ac vita constitutus, ut ratio postulat? &c. (Tusc. Quest. 2.) Such a system of moral direction and control, then, could it be formed, would bear no comparison to that which is provided by direct and external revelation, of which the doctrine, though delivered by different men, in different ages, is

consentaneous throughout; which is rendered authoritative by Divine attestation; which consists in clear and legislative enunciation, and not in human speculation and laborious inference; of which the teachers were as holy as their doctrine was sublime; and which in all ages has exerted a powerful moral influence upon the conduct of men. I know of but one Phaedo and one Polemon throughout all Greece," saith Origen, "who were ever made better by their philosophy; whereas Christianity hath brought

back its myriads from vice to virtue."

All these considerations then still farther support the presumption, that the will of God has been the subject of express revelation to man, because such a declaration of it is the only one which can be conceived adequate; complete; of common apprehension; sufficiently authoritative; and adapted to the circumstances; of mankind.

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04 FARTHER PROOFS OF THIS WEAKNESS AND UNCERTAINTY OF HUMAN REASON

The opinion, that sufficient notices of the will and purposes of God with respect to man may be collected by rational induction from his works and government, attributes too much to the power of human reason and the circumstances under which, in that case, it must necessarily commence its exercise.

Human reason must be taken, as it is in fact, a

weak and erring faculty, and as subject to have its operations suspended or disturbed by the influence of vicious principles and attachment to earthly things; neither of which can be denied, however differently they may be accounted for.

It is another consideration of importance that the exercise of reason is limited by our knowledge; in other words, that it must be furnished with subjects which it may arrange compare, and judge: for beyond what it clearly

conceives its power does not extend.

It does not follow, that, because many doctrines in religion and many rules in morals carry clear and decided conviction to the judgment instantly upon their being proposed, they were discoverable, in the first instance, by rational induction; any more than that the great and simple truths of philosophy, which have been brought to light by the efforts of men of superior minds, were within the compass of ordinary understandings,

because, after they were revealed by those who made the discovery, they instantly commanded the assent of almost all to whom they were proposed. The very first principles of what is called natural religion (8) are probably of this kind.

The reason of man, though it should assent to them, though the demonstration of them should be now easy, may be indebted even for them to the revelation of a superior mind, and that mind the mind of God.

(8) The term natural religion is often used equivocally. "Some understand by it everything in religion, with regard to truth and duty, which, when once discovered, may be clearly shown to have a real foundation in the nature and relations of things, and which unprejudiced reason will approve, when fairly proposed and set in a proper light; and accordingly very fair and goodly schemes of natural religion have been drawn up by Christian philosophers and divines,

in which they have comprehended a considerable part of what is contained in the Scripture revelation. In this view natural religion is not so called because it was originally discovered by natural reason, but because when once known it is what the reason of mankind duly exercised approves, as founded in truth and nature. Others take natural religion to signify that religion which men discover in the sole exercise of their natural faculties, without higher assistance." (Leland.) (9)

"When truths are once known to us, though by tradition, we are apt to be favorable to our own parts, and ascribe to our own understanding the discovery of what, in reality, we borrowed from others; or, at least, finding We can prove what at first we learnt from others, we are forward to conclude it an obvious truth, which, if we had sought, we could not have missed. Nothing seems hard to our understandings that is once known: and because what we see, we see with our own eyes, we are apt to

overlook or forget the help we had from others who showed it us and first made us see it, as if we were not at all beholden to them for those truths they opened the way to, and led us into; for, knowledge being only of truths that are perceived to be so, we are favorable enough to our own faculties to conclude that they, of their own strength, would have attained those discoveries without any foreign assistance, and that we know those truths by the strength and native light of our own minds, as they did from whom we

received them by theirs, only they had the luck to be before us. Thus the whole stock of human knowledge is claimed by everyone as his private possession, as soon as he (profiting by others discoveries) has got it into his own mind: and so it is; but not properly by his own single industry, nor of his own acquisition. He studies, it is true, and takes pains to make a progress in what others have delivered; but their pains were of another sort who first brought those truths to light which he afterward derives from

them. He that travels the roads now applauds his own strength and legs, that have carried him so far in such a scantling of time, and ascribes all to his own vigor; little considering how much he owes to their pains who cleared the woods, drained the bogs, built the bridges, and made the ways passable, without which he might have toiled much with little progress, A great many things which we have been bred up in the belief of from our cradles and are now grown familiar, (and, as it were, natural to us under the

Gospel.) we take for unquestionable obvious truths, and easily demonstrable, without considering how long we might have been in doubt or ignorance of them had revelation been silent, And many others are beholden to revelation who do not acknowledge it. It is no diminishing to revelation, that reason gives its suffrage too to the truths revelation has discovered: but it is our mistake to think, that because reason confirms them to us, we had the first certain knowledge of them from

thence, and in that clear evidence we now possess them," (Locke.)

This is rendered the more probable, inasmuch as the great principles of all religion, the existence of God, the immortality of the human soul, the accountableness of man, the good or evil quality of the most important moral actions, have, by none who have written upon them, by no legislator, poet, or sage of antiquity, however ancient, been represented as discoveries made by them in the course of

rational investigation; but they are spoken of as things commonly known among men, which they propose to defend, explain, demonstrate, or deny, according to their respective opinions. If we overlook the inspiration of the writings of Moses, they command respect as the most ancient records in the world, and as embodying the religious opinions of the earliest ages; but Moses nowhere pretends to be the author of any of these fundamental truths.

The book of Genesis opens with the words, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth;" but here the term "God" is used familiarly, and it is taken for granted, that both the name and the idea conveyed by it were commonly received by the people for whom Moses wrote.

The same writer gives the history of ages much higher than his own, and introduces the patriarchs of the human race holding conversations with one another in which the

leading subjects of religion and morals are often incidentally introduced; but they are never presented to us in the form of discussion; no patriarch, however high his antiquity, represents himself as the discoverer of these first principles, though he might, as Noah, be a "preacher" of that "righteousness" which was established upon them. Moses mentions the antediluvians who were inventors of the arts of working metals, and of forming and playing upon musical instruments; but

he introduces no one as the inventor of any branch of moral or religious science, though they are so much superior in importance to mankind.

In farther illustration it may be observed, that, in point of fact, those views on the subjects just mentioned which, to the reason of all sober Theists, since the Christian revelation was given, appear the most clear and satisfactory, have been found nowhere since patriarchal times, except in the Scriptures, which

profess to embody the true religious traditions and revelations of all ages, or among those whose reason derived principles from these revelations on which to establish its inferences.

We generally think it a truth, easily and convincingly demonstrated, that there is a God; and yet many of the philosophers of antiquity speak doubtingly on this point and some of them denied it.

At the present day, not merely a few speculative philosophers in the

heathen world, but the many millions of the human race who profess the religion of Buddha not only deny a Supreme First Cause but dispute with subtlety and vehemence against the doctrine.

We feel that our reason rests with full satisfaction in the doctrine that all things are created by one eternal and self-existent Being: but the Greek philosophers held that matter was eternally co-existent with God, This was the opinion of Plato, who has been called the Moses

of philosophers. Through the whole "Timaeus," Plato supposes two eternal and independent causes of all things: one that by which all things are made, which is God: the other, that from which all things are made, which is matter. Dr. Cudworth has in vain attempted to clear Plato of this charge. The learned Dr. Thomas Burnet, who was well acquainted with the opinions of the ancients, says that "the Ionic, Pythagoric, Plaonic and Stoic schools all agreed in asserting the eternity of matter; and that the

doctrine, that matter was created out of nothing, seems to have been unknown to the philosophers, and is one of which they had no notion." Aristotle asserted the eternity of the world, both in matter and form too which was but an easy deduction from the former principle, and is sufficiently in proof of its Atheistical tendency.

The same doctrine was extensively spread at a very ancient period throughout the east, and plainly takes away a great part of the

foundation of those arguments for the existence of a Supreme Deity, on which the moderns have so confidently rested for the demonstration of; the existence of God by rational induction, whether drawn from the works of nature, or from metaphysical principle; so much are those able works which have been written on this subject indebted to that revelation on which their authors too often close their eyes, for the very bases on which their most convincing arguments are built. The

same Atheistical results logically followed from the ancient Magian doctrine of two eternal principles, one good and the other evil: a notion which also infected the Greek schools, as appears from the example of Plutarch, and the instances adduced by him.

No one enlightened by the Scriptures, whether he acknowledges his obligations to them or not, has ever been betrayed into so great an absurdity as to deny the individuality of the human soul; and yet where the light of

revelation has not spread, absurd and destructive to morals as this notion is, it very extensively prevails. The opinion that the human soul is a part of God, enclosed for a short time in matter, but still a portion of his essence, runs through much of the Greek philosophy. It is still more ancient than that, and at the present day, the same opinion destroys all idea of accountability among those who in India follow the Brahminical system. "The human soul is God, and the acts of the human soul are therefore the acts of God."

This is the popular argument by which their crimes are justified.

The doctrine of one supreme, all-wise, and uncontrollable Providence, commends itself to our reason as one of the noblest and most supporting of truths; but we are not to overlook the source from whence even those draw it, who think the reason of man equal to its full development. So far were pagans from being able to conceive so lofty a thought, that the wisest of them invented subordinate

agents to carry on the affairs of the world; beings often divided among themselves, and subject to human passions; thereby destroying the doctrine of providence, and taking away the very foundation of human trust in a Supreme Power. This invention of subordinate deities gave birth to idolatry, which is sufficiently in proof both of its extent and antiquity.

The beautiful and well-sustained series of arguments which have often in modern times been

brought to support the presumption "that the human soul is immortal," may be read with profit; but it is not to be accounted for, that those who profess to confine themselves to human reason in the inquiry, should argue with so much greater strength than the philosophers of ancient times, except that they have received assistance from a source which they are unfair enough not to acknowledge. Some fine passages on this subject may be collected from Plato, Cicero, Seneca, and

others, but we must take them with others which express, sometimes doubt, and sometimes unbelief. With us this is a matter of general belief; but not so with the generality of either ancient or modern pagans. The same darkness which obscured the glory of God proportionably diminished the glory of man his true and proper immortality. The very ancient notion of an absorption of souls back again into the Divine Essence was with the ancients, what we know it to be now in the metaphysical system of the

Hindus, a denial of individual immortality; nor have the demonstrations of reason done anything to convince the other grand division of metaphysical pagans into which modern heathenism is divided, the followers of Buddha, who believe in the total annihilation of both men and gods after a series of ages, - a point of faith held probably by the majority of the present race of mankind. (1) (1) "The religion of Buddha," says Dr. Davy, "is more widely extended than any other religion. It appears to be

the religion of the whole of Tartary, of China, of Japan, and their dependencies, and of all the countries between China and the Burrampooter.

"The Buddhists do not believe in the existence of a Supreme Being, self-existent and eternal, the creator and preserver of the universe: indeed, it is doubtful if they believe in the existence and operation of any cause beside fate and necessity, to which they seem to refer all changes in the moral and physical world. They

appear to be Materialists in the strictest sense of the term, and to have no notion, of pure spirit or mind. Prane and hitta, life and intelligence, the most learned of them appear to consider identical:- seated in the heart, radiating from thence to different parts of the body, like heat from a fire;- uncreated, without beginning, at least that they know of; - capable of being modified by a variety of circumstances, like the breath in different musical instruments;- and like a vapor, capable of passing from one body to another;-

and like a flame, liable to be extinguished and totally annihilated. Gods, demons, men, reptiles, even the minutest and most imperfect animalcules, they consider as similar beings, formed of the four elements-heat, air, water, and that which is tangible, and animated by prane and hitta. They believe that a man may become a God or a demon; or that a God may become a man or an animalcule; that ordinary death is merely a change of form; and that this change is almost infinite, and bounded only by

annihilation, which they esteem the acme of happiness!" (Account of Ceylon)

These instances might be enlarged; but they amply show that they who speak of the sufficiency of human reason in matters of morals and religion neglect almost all the facts which the history of human opinion furnishes; and that they owe all their best views to that fountain of inspiration from which they so criminally turn aside. For how otherwise can the instances we have just

mentioned be explained? and how is it that those fundamental principles in morals and religion, which modern philosophers have exhibited as demonstrable by the unassisted powers of the human mind, were either held doubtfully, or connected with some manifest absurdity, or utterly denied by the wisest moral teachers among the Gentiles, who lived before the Christian revelation was given? They had the same works of God to behold, and the same course of providence to reason from, to neither of

which were they inattentive. They had intellectual endowments, which have been the admiration of all subsequent ages; and their reason was rendered acute and discriminative by the discipline of mathematical and dialectic science. They had everything which the moderns have except the Bible; and yet on points which have been generally settled among the moral philosophers of our own age as fundamental to natural religion, they had no just views, and no settled conviction. "The

various apprehensions of wise men," says Cicero, "will justify the doublings and demurs of skeptics, and it will then be sufficient to blame them, si aut consenserint alii, aut erit inventus aliquis, qni quid verum sit invenerit, when others agree, or any one has found out the truth. We say not that nothing is true; but that some false things are annexed to all that is true, tanta similitudine ut iis nulla sit certa judicandi, et assentiendi nota, and that, with so much likeness, that there is no certain note of

judging what is true, or assenting to it. We deny not that something may be true; percipi posse negamus, but we deny that it can be perceived so to be; for quid habemus in rebus bonis et malis explorati, what have we certain concerning good and evil? Nor for this are we to be blamed, but Nature, which has hidden the truth in the deep, naturam accusa quae in profundo veritatem penitus abstruserit" (Vide De Nat, Deorvm, lib. 1, n. 10,11. Acad, Qu. lib. 2, n. 66,120.) On this subject Dr. Samuel Clarke, though so

great an advocate of natural religion, concedes, that "of the philosophers, some argued themselves out of the belief of the very being of a God; some by ascribing all things to chance, others to absolute fatality, equally subverted all true notions of religions, and made the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, and a future judgment needless and impossible. Some professed open immorality, others by subtle distinctions patronized particular vices. The better sort of them, who were

most celebrated, discoursed with the greatest reason, yet with much uncertainty and doubtfulness, concerning things of the highest importance - the providence of God in governing the world, the immortality of the soul, and a future judgment."

If such facts prove the weakness and insufficiency of human reason, those just thoughts respecting God, his providence, his will, and a future state, which sometimes appear in the writings of the wisest

heathen, are not however, on the contrary, to be attributed to its strength.

Even if they were, the argument for the sufficiency of reason would not be much advanced thereby; for the case would then be, that the reason which occasionally reached the truth had not firmness enough to hold it fast, and the pinion which sometimes bore the mind into fields of light, could not maintain it in its elevation. But it cannot even be admitted, that the truth which occasionally

breaks forth in their works was the discovery of their own powers. There is much evidence to show, that they were indebted to a traditional knowledge much earlier than their own day, and that moral and religious knowledge among them received occasional and important accessions from the descendants of Abraham, a people who possessed records which, laying aside the question of their inspiration for the present, all candid Theists themselves will acknowledge, contain

noble and just views of God, and a correct morality. While it cannot be proved that human reason made a single discovery in either moral or religious truth; it may be satisfactorily established, that just notions as to both were placed within its reach, which it first obscured, and then corrupted.

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05 THE ORIGIN OF THOSE TRUTHS WHICH ARE FOUND IN THE WRITINGS AND RELIGIOUS SYSTEMS OF THE HEATHEN

We have seen that some of the leading truths of religion and morals, which are adverted to by heathen writers, or assumed in heathen systems, are spoken of as truths previously known to the world, and with which mankind were familiar. Also, that no legislator, poet, or philosopher of

antiquity, ever pretended to the discovery of the doctrines of the existence of a God, of providence, a future state, and of the rules by which actions are determined to be good or evil, whether these opinions were held by them with full conviction of their certainty, or only doubtfully. That they were transmitted by tradition from an earlier age; or were brought from some collateral source of information; or that they flowed from both; are therefore the only rational conclusions.

To tradition the wisest of the heathen often acknowledge themselves indebted.

A previous age of superior truth, rectitude, and happiness, sometimes called the golden age, was a commonly received notion among them. It is at least as high as Hesiod, who rivals Homer in antiquity. It was likewise a common opinion, that sages existed in ages anterior to their own, who received knowledge from the gods, and communicated it to men. The wisest heathens,

notwithstanding the many great things said of nature and reason, derive the origin, obligation, and efficacy of law from the gods alone. "No mortal," says Plato in his republic, "can make laws to purpose." Demosthenes calls law Eurhma kai doron Theos, "the invention and gift of God."

They speak of nomos agrapsos," unwritten laws," and ascribe both them, and the laws which were introduced by their various legislators, to the gods. Xenophon represents it as

the opinion of Socrates, that the unwritten laws received over the whole earth, which it was impossible that all mankind, as being of different languages, and not to be assembled in one place, should make, were given by the gods. (2) Plato is express on this subject: "After a certain flood, which but few escaped, on the increase of mankind, they had neither letters, writing, nor laws, but obeyed the manners and institutions of their fathers as laws: but when colonies separated from them, they

took an elder for their leader, and in their new settlements retained the customs of their ancestors, those especially which related to their gods: and thus transmitted them to their posterity; they imprinted them on the minds of their sons; and they did the same to their children.

This was the origin of right laws, and of the different forms of government." (De Leg. 3.) (2) Xen. Mem. lib. 4, cap, 4, sect. 19, 20. - To the same effect is that noble passage of Cicero

cited by Lactantius out of his work De Repullica.

"Est quidem vera lex, recta ratio, naturae congruens, diffusa in omnes, constans, seinpiterna, quae vocet ad officium jubendo, vetando, a fraude deterreat; quae tamen neque probos frustra jubet, aut vetat; nec improbos jubendo aut vetando movet. Huic legi nec abrogari fas est; nec derogari ex hac aliquid licet; neque tota abrogari potest. Nec vero aut per senatum, aut per populuma solvi hac lege possumus; neque est quaerendus

explanator, aut interpres ejus alius.

Nec enim alia lex Romae alia Athenis, alia nunc, alia posthac; sed et omnes gentes, et omni tempore, uma lox et sempiterna et immutabilis continebit; unusque erit communis quasi magister et imperator omnium Deus, ille legis hujus inventor, disceptator, lator; cui qui non parebit, ipse se fugiet, ac naturam hominis aspernabitur; atque hoc ipso luet maximas poenas, etiamsi caetera supplicia, quae putantur, effugerit:" - From

which it is clear that Cicero acknowledged a law antecedent to all human civil institutions, and independent of them, finding upon all, constant and perpetual, the same in all times and places, not one thing at Rome, and another at Athens; of an authority so high, that no human power had the right to alter or annul it; having God for its author, in his character of universal Master and Sovereign; taking hold of the very consciences of men, and following them with its animadversions, though

they should escape the hand of man, and the penalties of human codes.

This so exactly harmonizes with the Mosaic account, as to the flood of Noah, the origin of nations, and the Divine institution of religion and laws, that either the patriarchal traditions embodied in the writings of Moses, had gone down with great exactness to the times of Plato; or the writings of Moses were known to him; or he had gathered the substance of them, in his travels, from the Egyptian,

the Chaldean, or the Magian philosophers.

Nor is this an unsupported hypothesis. The evidence is most abundant, that the primitive source from whence every great religious and moral truth was drawn, must be fixed in that part of the world where Moses places the dwelling of the patriarchs of the human race, who walked with God, and received the law from his mouth. (3) There, in the earliest times, civilization and polity were found, while the rest of the earth

was covered with savage tribes, - a sufficient proof that Asia was the common center from whence the rest of mankind dispersed, who, as they wandered from these primitive seats, and addicted themselves more to the chase than to agriculture, became in most instances barbarous. (4)

(3) "The east was the source of knowledge from whence it was communicated to the western parts of the world. There the most precious remains of ancient

tradition were found. Thither the most celebrated Greek philosophers traveled in quest of science, or the knowledge of things Divine and human, and thither the lawgivers had recourse in order to their being instructed in laws and civil policy." (Leland.)

(4) The speculations of infidels as to the gradual progress of the original men from the savage life, and the invention of language, arts, laws, &c, have been too much countenanced by

philosophers bearing the name of Christ; some of them even holding the office of teachers of his religion, The writings of Moses sufficiently show that there never was a period in which the original tribes of men were in a savage state; and the gradual process of the development of a higher condition is a chimera. To those who profess to believe the Scriptures, their testimony ought to be sufficient: to those who do not, they are at least as good history as any other.

In the multifarious and bewildering superstitions of all nations, we also discover a very remarkable substratum of common tradition and religious faith.

The practice of sacrifice, which may at once be traced into all nations, and to the remotest antiquity, affords an eminent proof of the common origin of religion; inasmuch as no reason drawn from the nature of the rite itself, or the circumstances of men, can be given for the universality of the practice:

and as it is clearly a positive institute, and opposed to the interests of men, it can only be accounted for by an injunction, issued at a very early period of the world, and solemnly imposed. This injunction, indeed, received a force, either from its original appointment, or from subsequent circumstances, from which the human mind could never free itself. "There continued," says Dr. Shuckford, "for a long time among the nations usages which show that there had been an

ancient universal religion; several traces of which appeared in the rites and ceremonies which were observed in religious worship. Such was the custom of sacrifices expiatory and precatory; both the sacrifices of animals, and the oblations of wine, oil, and the fruits and products of the earth. These and other things which were in use among the patriarchs, obtained also among the Gentiles."

The events, and some of the leading opinions of the earliest ages, mentioned in

Scripture, may also he traced among the most barbarous, as well as in the Oriental, the Grecian, and the Roman systems of mythology. Such are the formation of the world; the fall and corruption of man; the hostility of a powerful and supernatural agent of wickedness, under his appropriate and Scriptural emblem, the serpent; the destruction of the world by water; the repeopling of it by the sons of noah; the expectation of its final destruction by fire; and, above all the promise of a great and divine deliverer.

(5)? The only method of accounting for this, is, that the same traditions were transmitted from the progenitors of the different families of mankind after the flood; that in some places they were strengthened, and "the impressions deepened by successive revelations, which assumed the first traditions, as being of Divine original, for their basis, and thus renewed the knowledge which had formerly been communicated, at the very time they enlarged it: and farther, that from the

written revelations which were afterward made to one people, some rays of reflected light were constantly glancing upon the surrounding nations.

(5) See note A at the end of this chapter.28

Nor are we at a loss to trace this communication of truth from a "common source to the Gentile nations; and also to show that they actually did receive accessions of information, both directly and indirectly, from a people who retained the primitive theological

system in its greatest purity.

We shall see sufficient reasons, when we come to speak on that subject, to conclude that all mankind have descended from one common pair.

If man is now a moral agent, the first man must be allowed to have; been a moral agent; and, as such, under rules of obedience; in which rules it is far more probable that he should be instructed by his Maker by means of direct communication, than that he should be left to collect

the will of his Maker from observation and experience. Those who deny the Scripture account of the introduction of death into the world, and think the human species were always liable to it, are bound to admit a revelation from God to the first pair as to the wholesomeness of certain fruits, and the destructive habits of certain animals, or our first progenitors would have been far more exposed to danger from deleterious fruits, &c, and in a more miserable condition through their

fears than any of their descendants, because they were without experience, and could have no information. (6) But it is far more probable, that they should have express information as to the will of God concerning their conduct; for until they had settled, by a course of rational induction, what was right, and what wrong, they could not, properly speaking, be moral agents; and, from the difficulties of such an inquiry, especially until they had had a long experience of the steady course of nature, and the

effect of certain actions upon themselves and society, they might possibly arrive at very different conclusions. (7)

(6) See Delaney's Revelation Examined with Candour, Dissertations 1 and 2.

(7) "It is very probable," says Puffendorf, "that God taught the first men "the chief heads of natural law."

But in whatever way the moral and religious knowledge of the first man was obtained, if he is allowed to have been under

an efficient law, he must at least have known, in order to the right regulation of himself, every truth essential to religion, and to personal, domestic, and social morals. The truth on these subjects was as essential to him as to his descendants, and more especially because he was so soon to be the head and the paternal governor, by a natural relation, of a numerous race, and to possess, by virtue of that office, great influence over them. If we assume, therefore, that the knowledge of the first man

was taught to his children, and it were the greatest absurdity to suppose the contrary, then, whether he received his information on the principal doctrines of religion, and the principal rules of morals, by express revelation from God, or by the exercise of his own natural powers, all the great principles of religion, and of personal, domestic, and social morals, must have been at once communicated to his children, immediately descending from him; and we clearly enough see the reason why the earliest

writers on these subjects never pretend to have been the discoverers of the leading truths of morals and religion, but speak of them as opinions familiar to men, and generally received. This primitive religious and moral system, as far as regards first principles, and all their important particular applications, was also complete, or there had been neither efficient religion nor morality in the first ages, which is contrary to all tradition, and to all history; and that this system was actually

transmitted, is clear from this, that the wisdom of very early ages consisted not so much in natural and speculative science, as in moral notions, rules of conduct, and an acquaintance with the opinions of the wise of still earlier periods.

The few persons through whom this system was transmitted to Noah, for in fact Methuselah was contemporary both with Adam and Noah, rendered any great corruption impossible; and therefore the crimes charged upon

the antediluvians are violence and other immoralities, rather than the corruption of truth; and Noah was "a preacher of righteousness" rather than a restorer of doctrine.

The flood, (8) being so awful and marked a declaration of God's anger against the violation of the laws of this primitive religion, would give great force and sanction to it, as a religious system, in the minds of Noah's immediate descendants. The existence of God; his providence; his favor to the good; his anger

against evil doers; the great rules of justice and mercy; the practice of a sacrificial worship; the observance of the Sabbath; the promise of a Deliverer, and other similar tenets, were among the articles and religious rites of this primitive system: nor can any satisfactory account be given, why they were transmitted to so many people, in different parts of the world; why they have continued to glimmer through the darkness of paganism to this day; why we find them more or less recognized in the

mythology, traditions, and customs of almost all ages ancient and modern, except that they received some original sanction of great efficacy, deeply fixing them in the hearts of the patriarchs of all the families of men. Those who deny the revelations contained in the Scriptures, have no means of accounting for these facts, which in themselves are indisputable. They have no theory respecting them which is not too childish to deserve serious refutation, and they usually prefer to pass them over in silence.

But the believer in the Bible can account for them, and he alone. The destruction of wicked men by the flood put the seal of Heaven upon the religious system transmitted from Adam; and under the force of this Divine and unequivocal attestation of its truth, the sons and descendants of Noah went forth into their different settlements, bearing for ages the deep impression of its sanctity and authority. The impression, it is true, at length gave way to vice, superstition, and false philosophy; but

superstition perverted truth rather than displaced it; and the doctrines, the history, and even the hopes of the first ages, were never entirely banished even from those fables which became baleful substitutes for their simplicity.

(8) Whatever maybe thought respecting the circumstances of the flood as mentioned by Moses, there is nothing in that event, considered as the punishment of a guilty race, and as giving an attestation of God's approbation of right

principles and a right conduct, to which a consistent Theist can object. For if the will of God is to be collected from observing the course of nature and providence, such signal and remarkable events in his government as the deluge, whether universal or only co-extensive with the existing race of men, may be expected to occur; and especially when an almost universal punishment, as connected with an almost universal wickedness, so strikingly indicated an

observant and a righteous government.

In the family of Abraham the true God was acknowledged. Melchizedec was the sovereign of one of the nations of Canaan, and priest of the most high God, and his subjects must therefore have been worshippers of the true Divinity. Abimelech the Philistine and his people, both in Abraham's days and in Isaac's, were also worshippers of Jehovah, and acknowledged the same moral principles

which were held sacred in the elect family. The revelations and promises made to Abraham would enlarge the boundaries of religious knowledge, both among the descendants of Ishmael, and those of his sons by Keturah; as those made to Shem would, with the patriarchal theology, be transmitted to his posterity-the Persians, Assyrians, and Mesopotamians. (9) In Egypt, even in the days of Joseph, he and the king of Egypt speak of the true GOD, as of a being mutually known and

acknowledged. Upon the arrival of the Israelites in Canaan, they found a few persons in that perhaps primitive seat of idolatry, who acknowledged "Jehovah to be God in heaven above, and in the earth beneath." Through the branch of Esau the knowledge of the true religion would pass from the family of Isaac, with its farther illustrations in the covenants made with Abraham, to his descendants. Job and his friends, who probably lived between Abraham and Moses, were professors of

the patriarchal religion; and their discourses show, that it was both a sublime and a comprehensive system. The plagues of Egypt and the miraculous escape of the Israelites, and the destruction of the Canaanitish nations, were all parts of an awful controversy between the true God and the idolatry spreading in the world; and could not fail of being largely noised abroad among the neighboring nations, and of making the religion of the Israelites known. (Jenkin's Reasonableness of

Christianity, vol. i, chap. 2.) Balaam, a Gentile prophet, intermixes with his predictions many brief but eloquent assertions of the first principles of religion; the omnipotence of Deity, his universal providence, and the immutability of his counsels; and the names and epithets which he applies to the Supreme Being, are, as Bishop Horsley observes, the very same which are used by Moses, Job, and the inspired writers of the Jews, namely, God, the Almighty, the Most High, and Jehovah; which is a

proof, that, gross as the corruptions of idolatry were now become, the patriarchal religion was not forgotten nor its language become obsolete.

(9) See Bishop Hoesley's Dissertations before referred to; and Leland'B View of the Necessity of Revelation, part i, chap, 2.

The frequent and public restorations of the Israelites to the principles of the patriarchal religion, after they had lapsed into idolatry, and fallen under the power of other nations, could not fail to make their

peculiar opinions known among those with whom they were so often in relations of amity or war, of slavery or dominion. We have evidence collateral to that of the Scriptures, that the building of the celebrated temple of Solomon, and the fame of the wisdom of that monarch, produced not only a wide-spread rumor, but, as it was intended by Divine wisdom and goodness, moral effects upon the people of distant nations, and that the Abyssinians received the Jewish religion after the

visit of the queen of Sheba, the principles of that religion being probably found to accord with those ancient traditions of the patriarchs, which remained among them. (1) The intercourse between the Jews and the states of Syria and Babylon on the one hand, and Egypt on the other, powers which rose to great eminence and influence in the ancient world, was maintained for many ages. Their frequent captivities and dispersions would tend to preserve in part, and in part to revive, the knowledge of the once

common and universal faith; for we have instances, that in the worst periods of their history there were among the captive Israelites those who adhered with heroic steadfastness to their own religion. We have the instance of the female captive in the house of Naaman the Syrian, and, at a later period, the sublime example of the three Hebrew youths, and of Daniel in the court of Nebuchadnezzar. The decree of this prince, after the deliverance of Shadrach and his

companions, ought not to be slightly passed over. It contained a public proclamation of the supremacy of Jehovah, in opposition to the gods of his country; and that monarch, after his recovery from a singular disease, became himself a worshipper of the true God; both of which are circumstances which could not but excite attention, among a learned and curious people, to the religious tenets of the Jews. We may add to this also, that great numbers of the Jews preserving their

Scriptures, and publicly worshipping the true God, never returned from the Babylonish captivity; but remained in various parts of that extensive empire after it was conquered by the Persians. The Chaldean philosophic schools, to which many of the Greek sages resorted for instruction, were therefore never without the means of acquaintance with the theological system of the Jews, however degenerate in process of time their wise men became, by addicting themselves to judicial astrology; and to

the same sacred source the conquest of Babylon conducted the Persians.

(1) The princes of Abyssinia claim descent from Menilek, the son of Solomon by the queen of Sheba. The Abyssinians say she was converted to the Jewish religion. The succession is hereditary in the line of Solomon, and the device of their kings is a lion passant, proper upon a field gules, and their motto, "'The lion of the race of Solomon and tribe of Judah hath overcome."

The Abyssinian eunuch who was met by Philip was not properly a Jewish proselyte, but an Abyssinian believer in Moses and the prophets. Christianity spread in this country at an early period; but many of the inhabitants to this day are of the Jewish religion. Tyre also must have derived an accession of religious information from its intercourse with the Israelites in the time of Solomon, and we find Hiram the king blessing the Lord God of Israel "as the

Maker of heaven and earth."

Cyrus, the celebrated subverter of the Babylonian monarchy, was of the Magian religion, whose votaries worshipped God under the emblem of fire, but held an independent and eternal principle of darkness and evil. He was, however, somewhat prepared by his hostility to idols, to listen to the tenets of the Jews; and his favor to them sufficiently shows, that the influence which Daniel's character, the remarkable facts which had

occurred respecting him at the courts of Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar, and the predictions of his own success by Isaiah, had exerted on his mind, was very great. In his decree for the rebuilding of the temple, recorded in Ezra, chap, 1, and 2 Chron. 36:23, he acknowledges "Jehovah to be the God of heaven," who had given him his kingdom, and had charged him to rebuild the temple, Nor could this testimony in favor of the God of the Jews be without effect upon his subjects;

one proof of which, and of the influence of Judaism upon the Persians, is, that in a short time after his reign, a considerable improvement in some particulars, and alteration in others, took place in the Magian religion by an evident admixture with it of the tenets and ceremonies of the Jews. (2) And whatever improvements the theology of the Persians thus received, and they were not few nor unimportant; whatever information they acquired as to the origin of the world, the events of the

first ages, and questions of morals and religion, subjects after which the ancient philosophers made keen and eager inquiries; they could not but be known to the learned Greeks, whose intercourse with the Persians was continued for so long a period, and be transmitted also into that part of India into which the Persian monarchs pushed their conquests.

It is indeed unquestionable, that the credit in which the Jews stood, in the Persian

empire; the singular events which brought them into notice with the Persian monarchs; the favor they afterward experienced from Alexander the Great and his successors, who reigned in Egypt, where they became so numerous, and so generally spoke the Greek, that a translation of the Scriptures into that language was rendered necessary; and their having in most of the principal cities of the Roman empire, even when most extended, indeed in all the cities which were celebrated for refinement and philosophy,

their synagogues and public worship, in Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch, at Athens, Corinth,

(2) See note B at the end of this chapter.

Ephesus, &c, as we read in the Acts of the Apostles, and that for a long time before the Christian era, - rendered their tenets very widely known: and as these events took place after their final reformation from idolatry, the opinions by which they were distinguished were those substantially which are taught in the Scriptures.

The above statements, to say nothing of the fact, that the character, office, opinions, and writings of Moses were known to many of the ancient philosophers and historians, who mention him by name, and describe the religion of the Jews, are sufficient to account for those opinions and traditions we occasionally meet with in the writings of the Greek and Roman sages which have the greatest correspondence with truth, and agree best with the Holy Scriptures. They flowed in upon them

from many channels, branching out at different times from the fountain of truth; but they were received by them generally as mere traditions or philosophic notions, which they thought themselves at liberty to adopt, reject, modify, or pervert, as the principles of their schools or their own fancy led them.

Let then every question which respects inspiration, miracles, and prophecies, be for the present omitted: the following conclusions

may properly close these observations:-

1. That as a history of early opinions and events, the Scriptures have at least as much authority as any history of ancient times whatever; nay, the very idea of their sacredness, whether well founded or not, renders their historical details more worthy of credit, because that idea led to their more careful preservation.

2. That their history is often confirmed by ancient pagan traditions and histories; and in no

material point, or on any good evidence contradicted.

3. That those fundamental principles of what is called natural religion, which are held by sober Theists, and by them denominated rational, the discovery of which they attribute to the unassisted understanding of man, are to be found in the earliest of these sacred writings, and are there supposed to have existed in the world previous to the date of those writings themselves.

4. That a religion founded on common notions and common traditions, comprehensive both in doctrines and morals, existed in very early periods of the world; and that from the agreement of almost all mythological systems, in certain doctrines, rites, and traditions, it is reasonable to believe, that this primitive theology passed in some degree into all nations.

5. That it was retained most perfectly among those of the descendants of

Abraham who formed the Israelitish state, and subsisted as a nation collaterally with the successive great empires of antiquity for many ages.

6. That the frequent dispersions of great numbers of that people, either by war or from choice, and their residence in or near the seats of ancient learning with their sacred books, and in the habit of observing their public worship, as in Chaldea, Egypt, Persia, and other parts of the ancient world, and the signal notice

into which they and their opinions were occasionally brought, could not but make their cosmogony, theology, laws, and history, very extensively known.

7. That the spirit of inquiry in many of the ancient philosophers of different countries, led them to travel for information on these very subjects, and often into those countries where the patriarchal religion had formerly existed in great purity, and where the tenets of the Jews, which tended to

revive or restore it, were well known.

8. That there is sufficient evidence that these tenets were in fact known to many of the sages of the greatest name, and to schools of the greatest influence, who, however, regarding them only as traditions or philosophical opinions, interwove such of them as best agreed with their views into their own systems, and rejected or refined upon others, so that no permanent and convincing system of morals and religion was,

after all, wrought out among themselves, while they left the populace generally to the gross ignorance and idolatry in which they were involved. (3) (3) The readiness of the philosophers of antiquity to seize upon every notion which could aid them in their speculations, is manifest by the use which those of them who lived when Christianity began to be known, and to acquire credit, made of its discoveries to give greater splendor to their own systems. The thirst of knowledge carried the

ancient sages to the most distant persons and places in search of wisdom, nor did the later philosophers any more than modem infidels neglect the superior light of Christianity, when brought to their own doors, but they were equally backward to acknowledge the obligation, "As the ancients," says Justin Martyr, "had borrowed from the prophets, so did the moderns from the Gospel" Tetullian observes in his Apology, "Which of your poets, which of your sophists, have not drunk

from the fountains of the prophets? It is from these sacred sources likewise that your philosophers have refreshed their thirsty spirits; and if they found anything in the Holy Scriptures to please their fancy, or to serve their hypotheses, they turned it to their own purpose, and made it sent their curiosity; not considering these writings to be sacred and unalterable, nor understanding their sense; every one taking or leaving, adopting or remodeling, as his imagination led him. Nor do I wonder that the

philosophers played such foul tricks with the Old Testament, when I find some of the same generation among ourselves who have made as bold with the New, and composed a deadly mixture of Gospel and opinion, led by a philosophizing vanity,"

It was from conversing with a Christian that Epictetus learned to reform the doctrine, and abase the pride of the Stoics; nor is it to be imagined that Marcus Antoninus, Maximus Tyrius, and others, were

ignorant of the Christian doctrine.

Rousseau admits, that the modern philosopher derives his better notions on many subjects from those very Scriptures, which he reviles; from the early impressions of education; from living and conversing in a Christian country, where those doctrines are publicly taught, and where, in spite of himself, he imbibes some portion of that religious knowledge which the sacred writings have

everywhere diffused. (Works, vol. ix, p. 71;

9. Finally, that so far from there being any evidence that any of those fundamental truths of religion or morals, which may occasionally appear in their writings, were discovered by their unassisted reason, we can trace them to an earlier age, and can show that they had the means of access to higher sources of information; while on the other hand it may be exhibited as a proof of the weakness of the human

mind, and the corruptness of the human heart, that they generally involved in doubt the great principles which they thus received; built upon them fanciful systems destructive of their moral efficacy; and mixed them with errors of the most deteriorating character. (4)

The last observation will be more fully illustrated in the ensuing chapter.

(4) See note C at the end of this chapter.

Note A. - Page 27.

The illustration of the particulars mentioned in the paragraph, from which reference is made to this note, may be given under different heads.

The Formation Of The World From Chaotic Matter, - Some remains of the sentiments of the ancient Chaldeans are preserved in the pages of Syncellus from Berosus and Alexander Polyhistor; and when the tradition is divested of its fabulous dress, we may trace in the account a primordial watery chaos, a separation

of the darkness from light, and of earth from heaven, the production of man from the dust of the earth, and an infusion of Divine reason into the man so formed. - The cosmogony of the Phenicians, as detailed by Sanchoniatho, makes the principle of the universe a dark air, and a turbulent chaos. The ancient Persians taught that God created the world at six different times, in manifest allusion to the six days' work as described by Moses. In the Institutes of Menu, a Hindu tract, supposed by Sir William

Jones to have been composed 1280 years before the Christian era, the universe is represented as involved in darkness, when the sole, self-existing power, himself undiscerned, made the world discernible. With a thought he first created the waters, which are called Nara, or the Spirit of God; and since they were his first ayana, or place of motion, he is thence named Narayana, or moving on the waters. The order of the creation in the ancient traditions of the Chinese is, - the heavens were first

formed; the foundations of the earth were next laid; the atmosphere was then diffused round the habitable globe, and last of all, man was created. The formation of the world from chaos may be discovered in the traditions of our Gothic ancestors. - See the Edda, and Faber's Horae Mosaicae, vol. i, page 3.

In the ancient Greek philosophy we trace the same tradition, and Plato clearly borrowed the materials of his account of the origin of things, either

from Moses, or from traditions which had proceeded from the same source. Moses speaks of God in the plural form, "In the beginning Gods created the heaven and the earth" and Plato has a kind of trinity in his ho agathos, "the good," or "intellect," who was properly the demiurgus, or former of the world, and his Psyche, or universal mundane soul, the cause of all the motion which is in the world. He also represents the first matter out of which the universe was formed as a rude chaos. In the Greek

and Latin poets we have frequent allusions to the same fact, and in some of them highly poetic descriptions of the chaotic state of the world, and its reduction to order. When America was discovered, traditions, bearing a very remarkable resemblance to the history of Moses on various subjects, were found among the semi-civilized nations of that continent. Gomara states in his history, that the Peruvians believed that, at the beginning of the world, there came from the north a being named Con, who

leveled mountains and raised hills solely by the word of his mouth; that he filled the earth with men and women whom he had created, giving them fruits and bread, and all things necessary for their subsistence; but that, being offended with their transgressions, he deprived them of the blessings which they had originally enjoyed, and afflicted their lands with sterility.

"The number of days employed in the work of creation," says Mr. Faber, "and the Divine rest on the

seventh day, produced that peculiar measure of time, the week, which is purely arbitrary, and which does not spring, like a day, or a month, or a year, from the natural motions of the heavenly bodies. Hence the general adoption of the hebdomadal period is itself a proof how widely a knowledge of the true cosmological system was diffused among the posterity of Noah." Thus, in almost every part of the globe, from Europe to the shores of India, and anciently among the Greeks, Romans, and

Goths, as well as among the Jews, we find the week used as a familiar measure of time, and some traces of the Sabbath.

The Fall Of Man. - That the human race were once innocent and happy, is an opinion of high antiquity, and great extent among the Gentile nations. The passages to this effect in the classical poets are well known. It is asserted in the Edda, the record of the opinions of our Scythian forefathers. "There can be little doubt," says Maurice, in his History of

Hindustan, "but that by the Satya-age, or age of perfection, the Brachmins obscurely allude to the state of perfection and happiness enjoyed by man in paradise. Then justice, truth, philanthropy, were practiced among all the orders and classes of mankind." That man is a fallen creature is now the universal belief of this class of pagans; and the degeneracy of the human soul, its native and hereditary degeneracy, and runs through much of the Greek philosophy. The immediate occasion of the

fall, the frailty of the woman, we find also alluded to equally in classical fable, in ancient Gothic traditions, and among various barbarous tribes. A curious passage to this effect occurs in Campbell's Travels among the Boschuana Hottentots.

The Serpent. - The agency of an evil and malignant spirit is found also in these widely extended ancient traditions. Little doubt can be entertained but that the generally received notion of good and evil demons grounded itself upon the

Scripture account of good and evil angels. Serpent worship was exceedingly general, especially in Egypt and the east, and this is not to be accounted for but as it originated from a superstitious fear of the malignant demon, who, under that animal form, brought death into the world, and obtained a destructive dominion over men.

That in ancient sculptures and paintings, the serpent symbol is sometimes emblematical of wisdom, eternity, and other moral

ideas, may be allowed; but it often appears connected with representations which prove that under this form the evil principle was worshipped, and that human sacrifices were offered to gratify the cruelty of him who was a "murderer from the beginning." In the model of the tomb of Psammis, made by Mr. Belzoni, and recently exhibited in London, and in the plates which accompany his work on Egypt, are seen various representations of monstrous serpents with the tribute of human heads

which had been offered to them. This is still more strikingly exemplified in a copy of part of the interior of an Egyptian tomb, at Biban al Melook in Richardson's Travels in Egypt. Before an enormous serpent three men are represented on their knees, with their heads just struck off by the executioner, "while the serpent erects his crest to a level with their throats, ready to drink the stream of life as it gurgles from their veins." This was probably the serpent Typhon, of the ancient Egyptians; the

same as the Python of the Greeks; and, as observed by Mr. Faber, "the notion that the Python was oracular, may have sprung from a recollection of the vocal responses, which the tempter gave to Eve under the borrowed figure of that reptile." By consulting Moore's Hindu Pantheon, it will be seen that the serpent Caliya is represented as the decided enemy of the mediatorial God, Krishna, whom he persecutes, and on whom he inflicts various sufferings, though he is at length vanquished.

Krishna, pressed within the folds of the serpent, and then triumphing over him in bruising his head beneath his feet, is the subject of a very ancient Hondo bas-relief, and carries with it its own interpretation.

In the Edda, Fab. 16, "the great serpent is said to be an emanation from Loke, the evil principle; and hela, or hell or death, in a poetical vein of allegory not unworthy of our own Milton, is celebrated as the daughter of that personage, and as the sister of the

dragon. Indignant at the pertinacious rebellion: of the evil principle, the universal Father dispatched certain of the gods to bring those children to him. When they were come, he threw the serpent down to the bottom of the ocean. But there the monster grew so large, that he wound himself round the whole globe of the earth, Death meanwhile was precipitated into hell, where she possesses vast apartments, strongly built, and fenced with grates of iron. Her hall is grief; her

table famine; hunger, her knife; delay, her servant; faintness, her porch; sickness and pain, her bed; and her tent, cursing and howling."

The Flood Of Noah. - Josephus, in his first book against Apion, states that Berosus the Chaldean historian relates, in a similar manner to Moses, the history of the flood, and the preservation of Noah in an ark or chest. In Abydemis's History of Assyria, in passages quoted by Eusebius, mention is made of an ancient prince

of the name of Sisithrus, who was forewarned by Saturn of a deluge. In this account, the ship, the sending forth and returning of the birds, the abating of the waters, and the resting of the ship on a mountain, are all mentioned. (Euseb, Praep.

Evang. lib. 9, c. 12. - Grotius on the Christian Religion, lib. 1, sec. 16.) Lucian, in his book concerning the goddess of Syria, mentions the Syrian traditions as to this event. Here Noah is called Deucalion, and that he was

the person intended under this name is rendered indubitable by the mention of the wickedness of the antediluvians, the piety of Deucalion, the ark, and the bringing into it of the beasts of the earth by pairs. The ancient Persian traditions, as Dr. Hyde has shown, though mixed with fable, have a substantial agreement with the Mosaic account. In Hindustan, the ancient poem of Bhagavot treats of a flood which destroyed all mankind, except a pious prince, with seven of his attendants and their wives. The Chinese

writers in like manner make mention of a universal flood. In the legends of the ancient Egyptians, Goths, and Druids, striking references are made to the same event; (Edda, Fab, 4; Davies's Mythology of the British Druids, p. 226,) and it was found represented in the historical paintings of the Mexicans, and among the American nations. The natives of Otaheite believed that the world was torn in pieces formerly by the anger of their gods; the inhabitants of the Sandwich Islands have a

tradition that the Etooa, who created the world, afterward destroyed it by an inundation; and recollections of the same event are preserved among the New Zealanders, as the author had the opportunity of ascertaining lately in a conversation with two of their chiefs, through an interpreter. For large illustrations of this point, see Bryants Heathen Mythology, and Faber's Horae Mosaicae.

Sacrifice. - The great principle of the three dispensations of religion in

the Scriptures, - The Patriarchal, the Mosaic, and the Christian, - that without shedding of blood there is no remission, has fixed itself in every pagan religion of ancient and modern times. For though the followers of Buddha are forbidden to offer sanguinary sacrifices to him, they offer them to demons in order to avert various evils; and their presentation of flowers and fruits to Buddha himself shows, that one part of the original rite of sacrifice has been retained, though the other, through a

philosophic refinement, is given up. Sacrifices are, however, offered in China, where the most ancient form of Buddhism generally prevails; a presumption that the Buddhism of Ceylon, and some parts of India, is a refinement upon a more ancient system. "That the practice of devoting peculiar victims has, at one period or another, prevailed in every quarter of the globe; and that it has been alike adopted by the most barbarous and by the most civilized nations, can

scarcely be said to need regular and formal proof,"

Expectation Of A Deliverer. - Amidst the miseries of succeeding ages, the ancient pagan world was always looking forward to the appearance of a great Deliverer and Restorer, and this expectation was so general, that it is impossible to account for it but from "the promises made unto the fathers," beginning with the promise of conquest to the seed of the woman over the power of the serpent. It is a singular fact, and still

worthy of remark, though so often stated, that, a little before our Lord's advent, an expectation of the speedy appearance of this Deliverer was general among the nations of antiquity. "The fact," says Bishop Horsely, "is so notorious to all who have any knowledge of antiquity, that if anyone would deny it, I would decline all dispute with such an adversary, as too ignorant to receive conviction, or too disingenuous to acknowledge what he must secretly admit." It is another singular fact, that

Virgil, in his Pollio, by an application of the Sybilline verses, which are almost literally in the high and flowing strains in which Isaiah prophesies of Christ, to a child of his friend, one of the Roman consuls, whose birth was just expected, and that out of an extravagant flattery, should call the attention of the world to those singular and mysterious books, so shortly before the birth of him who alone could fulfill the prophecies they contain. For a farther account of the Sybilline verses, the reader is

referred to Prideaux's Connection, to Bishop Lowth's Dissertations, and to Bishop Horsley't Dissertation on the Prophecies of the Messiah, dispersed among the heathen. It is enough here to say, that it is a historical fact, that the Sybilline books existed, among the Romans from an early period;- that these oracles of the Canaan Sybil were held in such veneration, that the book which contained them was deposited in a stone chest in the temple of Jupiter, in the capitol, and committed

to the care of two persons appointed to that office expressly;- that about a century before our Savior's birth, the book was destroyed in the fire which consumed the temple in which it was deposited;- that the Roman Senate knew that similar oracles existed among other nations, for to repair that loss, they sent persons to make a new collection of these oracles, in different parts of Asia, in the islands of the Archipelago, in Africa, and in Sicily, who returned with about a thousand verses, which

were deposited in the place of the originals, and kept with the same care;- and that the predictions which Virgil weaves into his fourth Eclogue, of the appearance of a king whose monarchy was to be universal, and who was to bestow upon mankind the blessings he describes, were contained in them. It follows, therefore, that such predictions existed anciently among the Romans; that they were found in many other parts of Europe, and Asia, and Africa; and that they had so marvelous an agreement

with the predictions of the Jewish prophets, that either they were in part copies from them, or predictions of an inspiration equally sacred- the fragments of very ancient prophecy interwoven probably with the fables of later times. "If," as Bishop Horsley justly observes, "any illiterate persons were to hear Virgil's poem read, with the omission of a few allusions to the heathen mythology, which would not affect the general sense of it, he would without hesitation pronounce it to

be a prophecy of the Messiah." It might seem indeed that the poet had only in many passages translated Isaiah, did he not expressly attribute the predictions he has introduced into his poem to the Cumaean Sybil; which he would not have done if such passages had not been found in the oracles, because they were then in existence, and their contents were known to many. The subsequent forgeries of these oracles in the first ages of the Church, also, prove at least this, that the true Sybilline

verses contained prophetic passages capable of a strong application to the true universal Deliverer, which those pious frauds aimed at making more particular and more convincing. Those who do not read Latin may consult "the Messiah" of Pope, with the principal passages from Virgil in the notes, translated and collated with prophecies from Isaiah, which will put them in possession of the substance of this singular and most interesting production.

Nor is it only on the above points that we perceive the ancient traditions and opinions preserved in their grand outline among different heathen nations, but also in the Scriptural doctrine of the destruction of the present system of material nature The Pythagoreans, Platonists, Epicureans, Stoics, all had notions of a general conflagration, After the doctrine of the Stoics, Ovid thus speaks, Metam. lib.l.

"Esse quoque in fatis reminiscitur affore tempus

Quo mare, quo tellus, correptaque regio caeli

Ardeat, et mundi moles operosa laboret."

Rememb'ring in the fates a time when fire

Should to the battlements of heaven aspire,

When all his blazing worlds above should burn,

And all the inferior globe to cinders turn.

- Dryden.

Seneca, speaking of the same event, ad Merciam c. ult, says, "Tempus adveniret quo sidera

sideribus incurrent, &c. The tune will come when the whole world will be consumed, that it may be again renewed, when the powers of nature will be turned against herself, when stars will rush on stars, and the whole material world, which now appears so resplendent with beauty and harmony, will be destroyed in one general conflagration. In this grand catastrophe of nature, all animated beings, (excepting the universal intelligence,) men, heroes, demons, and

gods, shall perish together."

The same tradition presents itself in different forms in all leading systems of modern paganism.

Note B. - Page 32.

Of the controversy as to Zoroaster, Zeratusht, or Zertushta, and the sacred books said to have been written by him called Zend, or Zendavesta, which has divided critics so eminent, it would answer no important end to give an abstract. Those who wish

for information on the subject are referred to Hyde's Religio Veterum Persarum; Prideaux's Connection; Warburton's Divine Legation; Bryant's Mythology; The Universal History; Sir W. Jones' Works, vol.iii, p. 115; M.

Du Perron, and Richardson's Dissertation prefixed to his Persian and Arabic Dictionary. But whatever may become of the authority of the whole or part of the Zendavesta, and with whatever fables the History of the Reformer of the Magian religion may

be mixed, the learned are generally agreed that such a reformation took place by his instrumentality. "Zeratusht," says Sir W, Jones, "reformed the old religion by the addition of genii or angels, of new ceremonies in the veneration shown to fire, of a new work which he pretended to have received from heaven, and, above all, by establishing the actual adoration of the Supreme Being," and he farther adds, "The reformed religion of Persia continued in force till that country was conquered by

the Musselmans; and, without studying the Zend, we have ample information concerning it in the modern Persian writings of several who profess it. Bahman always named Zeratusht with reverence; he was in truth a pure Theist, and strongly disclaimed any adoration of the fire or other elements, and he denied that the doctrine of two coeval principles, supremely good, and supremely bad, formed any part of his faith." "The Zeratusht of Persia, or the Zoroaster of the Greeks,"

says Richardson, "was highly celebrated by the most discerning people of ancient times; and his tenets, we are told, were most eagerly and rapidly embraced by the highest in rank and the wisest men in the Persian Empire." - Dissertation prefixed to his Persian Dictionary. He distinguished himself by denying that good and evil, represented by light and darkness, were coeval, independent principles, and asserted the supremacy of the true God, and exact conformity with the doctrine contained in a

part of that celebrated prophecy of Isaiah, in which Cyrus is mentioned by name. "I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me," no coeval power, "I form the light, and create darkness, I make peace, or good, and create evil, I the Lord do all these things." Fire by Zerdushta appears to have been used emblematically only, and the ceremonies for preserving and transmitting it, introduced by him, were manifestly taken from the Jews, and

the sacred fire of their tabernacle and temple.

The old religion of the Persians was corrupted by Sabianism, or the worship of the host of heaven, with its accompanying superstition. The Magian doctrine, whatever it might be at first, had degenerated, and two eternal principles, good and evil, had been introduced. It was therefore necessarily idolatrous also, and, like all other false systems, flattering to the vicious habits of the people, So

great an improvement in the moral character and influence of the religion of a whole nation as was effected by Zoroaster, a change which is not certainly paralleled in the history of the religion of mankind, can scarcely therefore be thought possible, except we suppose a Divine interposition, either directly, or by the occurrence of some very impressive events. Now, as there are so many authorities for fixing the time of Zoroaster or Zeratusht not many years

subsequent to the death of the great Cyrus, the events to which we have referred in the text are those, and indeed the only ones, which will account for his success in that reformation of religion of which he was the author: for had not the minds of men been prepared for this change by something extraordinary, it is not supposable that they would have adopted a purer faith from him. That he gave them a better doctrine is clear from the admissions of even Dean Prideaux, who has very unjustly branded him as an

impostor. Let it then be remembered, that as "the Most High ruleth in the kingdoms of men," He often overrules great political events for moral purposes. The Jews were sent into captivity to Babylon to be reformed from their idolatrous propensities, and their reformation commenced with their calamity. A miracle was there wrought in favor of the three Hebrews, confessors of one only God, and that under circumstance! to put shame upon a popular idol in the presence of the king, and

"all the rulers of the provinces," that the issue of this controversy between Jehovah and idolatry might be made known throughout that vast empire.

Worship was refused to the idol by a few Hebrew captives, and the idol had no power to punish the public affront:- the servants of Jehovah were cast into a furnace, and he delivered them unhurt; and a royal decree declared "that there was no God who could deliver after this sort,"

The proud monarch himself is smitten with a singular disease;- he remains subject to it until he acknowledges the true God; and, upon his recovery, he publicly ascribes to HIM both the justice and the mercy of the punishment. This event takes place also in the accomplishment of a dream which none of the wise men of Babylon could interpret: it was interpreted by Daniel, who made the fulfillment to redound to the honor of the true God, by ascribing to him the perfection of

knowing the future, which none of the false gods, appealed to by the Chaldean sages, possessed; as the inability of their servants to interpret the dream sufficiently proved. After these singular events, Cyrus takes Babylon, and he finds there the sage and the statesman, Daniel, the worshipper of the God "who creates both good and evil," "who makes the light and forms the darkness" There is moral certainty, that he and the principal Persians throughout the empire would have the prophecy of Isaiah

respecting Cyrus, delivered more than a hundred years before he was born, and in which his name stood recorded, along with the predicted circumstances of the caption of Babylon, pointed out to them; as every reason, religious and political, urged the Jews to make the prediction a matter of notoriety: and from Cyrus's decree in Ezra, it is certain that he was acquainted with it, because there is in the decree an obvious reference to the prophecy. This prophecy so strangely fulfilled would give mighty

force to the doctrine connected with it, and which it proclaims with so much majesty.

"I am Jehovah, and none else,

Forming Light, and creating Darkness,

Making Peace, and creating Evil,

I Jehovah am the author of all these things."

- Lowth's Translation.

Here the great principle of corrupted Magianism was directly attacked; and in

proportion as the fulfillment of the prophecy was felt to be singular and striking, the doctrine blended with it would attract notice. Its force was both felt and acknowledged, as we have seen in the decree of Cyrus for the rebuilding of the temple. In that, Cyrus acknowledged the true God to be supreme, and thus renounced his former faith; and the example, the public example of a prince so beloved, and whose reign was so extended, could not fail to influence the religious opinions of his

people, That the effect did not terminate in Cyrus we know; for from the book of Erra, it appears that both Darius and Artaxerxes made decrees in favor of the Jews, in which Jehovah has the emphatic appellation repeatedly given to him, "the God of heaven;" the very terms used by Cyrus himself. Nor are we to suppose the impression confined to the court; for the history of the three Hebrew youths; of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, sickness, and reformation from idolatry; of the interpretation of the

handwriting on the wall by Daniel, the servant of the living God; of his deliverance from the lions; and the publicity of the prophecy of Isaiah respecting Cyrus, were too recent, too public, and too striking in their nature, not to be often and largely talked of. Beside, in the prophecy respecting Cyrus, the intention of almighty God in recording the name of that monarch in an inspired book, and showing beforehand that he had chosen him to overturn the Babylonian empire, is expressly mentioned at

having respect to two great objects, First, The deliverance of Israel, and Second, The making known his supreme Divinity among the nations of the earth. I again quote Lowth's translation:-

"For the sake of my servant Jacob

And of Israel my chosen,

I have even called thee by thy name,

I have surnamed thee, though thou knewest me not.

I am Jehovah, and none else,

Beside me there is no God;

I will gird thee, though thou hast not known me,

That they may know, from the rising of the sun,

And from the west, that there is NONE BESIDE ME;" &c.

It was therefore intended by this proceeding on the part of Providence, to teach not only Cyrus, but the

people of his vast empire, and surrounding nations, First, That He was Jehovah, the self-subsistent the eternal God; Second, That he was God Alone, there being no Deity beside himself; and Third, That good and evil, represented by light and darkness, were neither independent nor eternal subsistences; but his great instruments and under his control.

The Persians, who had so vastly extended their empire by the conquest of the countries formerly held

by the monarchs of Babylon, were thus prepared for such a reformation of their religion as Zoroaster effected. The principles he advocated had been previously adopted by several of the Persian monarchs, and probably by many of the principal persons of that nation. Zoroaster himself thus became acquainted with the great truths contained in this famous prophecy, which attacked the very foundations of every idolatrous and Manichean system. From the other

sacred books of the Jews, who mixed with the Persians in every part of the empire, he evidently learned more. This is sufficiently proved from the many points of similarity between his religion and Judaism, though he should not be allowed to speak so much in the style of the Holy Scriptures as some passages in the Zendavesta would indicate. He found the people however "prepared of the Lord" to admit his reformations, and he carried them. I cannot but look upon this

as one instance of several merciful dispensations of God to the Gentile world, through his own peculiar people the Jews, by which the idolatries of the heathen were often checked, and the light of truth rekindled among them. In this view the ancient Jews evidently considered the Jewish Church as appointed not to preserve only but to extend true religion. "God be merciful to us and bless us, that thy ways may be known upon earth, thy saving health unto all nations." This renders

pagan nations more evidently "without excuse." That this dispensation of mercy was afterward neglected among the Persians is certain, how long the effect continued we know not, nor how widely it spread; perhaps longer and wider than may now distinctly appear. If the Magi, who came from the east to see Christ, were Persians, some true worshippers of God would appear to have remained in Persia to that day; and if, as is probable, the prophecies of Isaiah and Daniel were retained

among them, they might be among those who "waited for redemption," not at Jerusalem, but in a distant part of the world. The Parsees, who were nearly extirpated by Mohammedan fanaticism, were charged by their oppressors with the idolatry of fire, and this was probably true of the multitude. Some of their writers however warmly defended themselves against the charge. A considerable number of them remain in India to this day, and profess to

have the books of Zoroaster.

This note contains a considerable digression, but its connection with the argument in the text is obvious. He who rejects the authority of the Scriptures will not be influenced by what has been said of the prophecies of Isaiah, or the events of the life of Daniel; but still it is not to be denied, that while the Persian Empire remained, a Persian moral philosopher who taught sublime doctrines flourished, and that his

opinions had great influence. The connection of the Jews and Persians is an undeniable matter of historic fact. The tenets ascribed to Zoroaster bear the marks of Jewish origin, because they are mingled with some of the peculiar rites and circumstances of the Jewish temple. From this source the theology of the Persians received improvements in correct and influential notions of Deity especially, and was enriched with the history and doctrines of the Mosaic records. The affairs of the Greeks were so interwoven

with those of the Persians, that the sages of Greece could not be ignorant of the opinions of Zertushta, known to them by the name of Zoroaster, and from this school some of their best notions were derived.

Note C. - Page 35.

The greatest corruptions of religion are to be traced to superstition, and to that vain and bewildering habit of philosophizing, which obtained among the ancients. Superstition was the besetting sin of the ignorant, vain speculation

of the intelligent. Both sprung from the vicious state of the heart; the expression was different, but the effect the same. The evil probably arose in Egypt, and was largely improved upon by the philosophers of Greece and India, Systems, hypotheses, cosmogonies, &c, are all the work of philosophy; and the most subtle and bewildering errors, such as the eternity of matter, the metempsychosis, the absorption of the human soul at death, &c, have sprung from them. -

Ancient wisdom, both religious and moral, was contained in great principles, expressed in maxims, without affectation of systematic relation and arrangement, and without any deep research into reasons and causes. The moment philosophy attempted this; the weakness and waywardness of the human mind began to display themselves. Theories sprung up in succession; and confusion and contradiction at length produced skepticism in all, and in many matured it

into total unbelief. The speculative habit affected at once the opinions of ancient Africa and Asia; and in India, the philosophy of Egypt and Greece remains to this day, ripened into its full bearing of deleterious fruit.

The similarity of the Greek and modern Asiatic systems is indeed a very curious subject; for in the latter is exhibited at this day the philosophy of paganism, while in other places false religion is seen only or chiefly in its simple form of superstition. The

coincidence of the Hondo and Greek mythology has been traced by Sir W. Jones; and his opinions on this subject are strongly confirmed by the still more striking coincidence in the doctrines of the Hondo and Grecian philosophical sects. "The period," says Mr. Ward, (View of the History of the Hindus, &c,)

"when the most eminent of the Hondo philosophers flourished, is still involved in much obscurity; but the apparent agreement in many striking particulars between the Hondo and the

Greek systems of philosophy, not only suggests the idea of some union in their origin, but strongly pleads for their, belonging to one age, notwithstanding the unfathomable antiquity claimed by the Hindus; and after the reader shall have compared the two author is persuaded he will not consider the conjecture as improbable, that Pythagoras and others did really visit India, or that Goutumu and Pythagoras were cotemporaries, or nearly so," (Vol. 4.) Many of the subjects discussed

among the Hindus were the very subjects which excited the disputes in the Greek academies, such as the eternity of matter, the first cause; God the soul of the world; the doctrine of atoms; creation; the nature of the gods; the doctrines of fate, transmigration, successive revolutions of worlds, absorption into the Divine Being," &c. (Ibid. p. 115.)

Mr. Ward enters at large into this coincidence in his introductory remarks to his fourth volume, to which the reader is referred, it

shall only be observed, that those speculations, and subtle arguments just mentioned, both in the Greek and Asiatic branches of pagan philosophy, gave birth to absolute Atheism. - Several of the Greek philosophic sects, as is well known, were professedly Atheistic. Cudworth enumerates four forms assumed by this species of unbelief. -

The same principles which distinguish their sects may be traced in several of those of the Hindus, and above all the Atheistical

system of Buddha, branched off from the vain philosophy of the Brachminical schools, and has extended farther than Hinduism itself. The reason of all this is truly given by Bishop Warburton, as to the Greeks, and it is equally applicable to the Asiatic philosophy of the present day, which is so clearly one and the same, and also to many errors which have crept into the Church of Christ itself. "The philosophy of the Greeks," he observes, led to unbelief, "because it was

above measure refined and speculative, and used to be determined by metaphysical rather than by moral principles, and to stick to all consequences, how absurd soever, that were seal to arise from such principles."

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06 THE NECESSITY OF REVELATION - STATE OF RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE AMONG THE HEATHEN

Several presumptive arguments have been

offered in favor of the opinion, that almighty God in his goodness has made an express revelation of his will to mankind. They have been drawn from the fact, that we are moral agents, and therefore under a law or rule of conduct -from the consideration that no law can be binding till made known, or at least rendered cognizable by those whom it is intended to govern- from the inability of the generality of men to collect any adequate information on moral and religious subjects by processes of

induction-from the insufficiency of reason, even in the wisest, to make any satisfactory discovery of the first principles of religion and duty-from the want of all authority and influence in such discoveries, upon the majority of mankind, had a few minds of superior order and with more favorable opportunities been capable of making them-from the fact that no such discovery was ever made by the wisest of the ancient sages, inasmuch as the truths they held were in existence before their day,

even in the earliest periods of the patriarchal ages-and from the fact, that whatever truths they collected from early tradition, or from the descendant of Abraham, mediately or immediately, they so corrupted under the pretence of improving them, (5) as to destroy their harmony and moral influence, thereby greatly weakening the probability that moral truth was ever an object of the steady and sincere pursuit of men. To these presumptions in favor of an express revelation, written,

preserved with care, and appointed to be preached and published under the authority of its author, for the benefit of all, wise or unwise, we may add the powerful presumption which is afforded by the necessity of the case. This necessity of a revelation is to be collected, not only from what has been advanced, but from the state of moral and religious knowledge and practice, in those countries where the records which profess to contain the Mosaic and the Christian revelations have been or are still unknown.

The necessity of immediate Divine instruction was acknowledged by many of the wisest and most inquiring of the heathen, under the conviction of the entire inability of man unassisted by God to discover truth with certainty, - so greatly had the primitive traditional revelations been obscured by errors before the times of the most ancient of those sages among the heathen, whose writings have in whole or in part been transmitted to us, and so little confidence had they in themselves to separate

truth from error, or to say, "This is true and that false." And as the necessity of an express and authenticated revelation was acknowledged, so it was publicly exhibited, because on the very first principles of religion and morals, there was either entire ignorance, or no settled and consonant opinions, even among the wisest of mankind themselves. (6) (5) Plato, in his Epinominis, acknowledges that the Greeks learned many things from the barbarians, though he asserts, that they

improved what they thus borrowed, and made it better, especially in what related to the worship of the gods, (Plat, Oper. p. 703. Edit. Ficin. Lugd. 1590.)

(6) Plato, beginning his discourse of the gods and the generation of the world, cautions his disciples "not to expect anything beyond a likely conjecture concerning these things." Cicero, referring to the same subject, says, "Latent ista om-nia crassis occulta et drcumfusa tenebris, all

these things are involved in deep obscurity."

The following passage from the same author may be recommended to the consideration of modern exalters of the power of unassisted reason. The treasures of the philosophy of past ages were poured at his feet, and he had studied every branch of human wisdom, with astonishing industry and acute ness, yet he observes, "Quod si tales nos natura genuisset, ut eam ipsam intueri, et perspicere, eademque optima duce cursum vitae

conficere possemus; haud erat sane quod quisquam rationem, ac doctrinam requireret. Nunc parvulos nobis dedit igniculos, quos celeriter malis moribus, opinionibusque depravati sic restmguimus, ut nusquam natura lumen appareat. If we had come into the world in such circumstances, as that we could clearly and distinctly have discerned nature herself, and have been able in the course of our lives to follow her true and uncorrupted directions, this alone might have been sufficient, and there would

have bees, little need of teaching and instruction; but now nature has given us only some small sparks of right reason, which we so quickly extinguish with corrupt opinions and evil practices, that the true light of nature nowhere appears." (Tusc. Quaest, 3.) The same author, (Tusc. Quast. 1,) having reckoned up the opinions of philosophers as to the soul's immortality, concludes thus, "Harum sententiarum quae vera est Deus aliquis viderit, quae verisimillima est, magna quaestio est. Which of

these opinions is true, some God must tell us; which is most like truth, is a great question." Jamblicus, speaking of the principles of Divine worship, saith; "It is manifest that those things are to be done which are pleasing to God; but what they are, it is not easy to know, except a man were taught them by God himself, or by some person who had received them from God, or obtained the knowledge of them by some Divine means," (Jamb, in Vit, Pythag, c. 28.)

Some proofs of this have already been adduced; but the importance of the subject requires that they should be enlarged.

Though the belief of one Supreme Being has been found in many parts of the world, yet the notion of subordinate deities, the immediate dispensers of good and evil to men, and the objects of their fear and worship, has almost equally obtained; and this of necessity destroyed or greatly counteracted the moral influence of that just opinion.

"The people generally among the Gentiles," says Dr, Tenison," did rise little higher than the objects of sense. They worshipped them each as supreme in their kind, or no otherwise unequal than the sun, and the moon, or the other celestial bodies, by the adoration of which the ancient idolaters, as Job intimateth, denied (or excluded) the God that is above. Porphyry himself, one of the most plausible apologists for the religion of the Gentiles, doth own in some the most gross and blockish idolatry of mean

objects. He tells us that it is not a matter of which we should be amazed, if most ignorant men esteemed wood and stones Divine statues; seeing they who are unlearned look upon monuments which have inscriptions upon them as ordinary stones, and regard books as so many bundles of paper." (Discourse on Idolatry, p. 50.) The modern idolatry of Hindustan, which in principle differs nothing from that of the ancient world, affords a striking comment upon this point, and indeed is of great

importance in enabling us to conceive justly of the true character and practical effects of idolatry in all ages. The Hindus acknowledge one Supreme Being, but they never worship him, nor think that he concerns himself with human affairs at all

"The Hindus believe in one God, so completely abstracted in his own essence, however, that in this state he is emphatically the unknown, and is consequently neither the object of hope nor of fear; he is even destitute of

intelligence, and remains in a state of profound repose." (Ward's Hondo Mythology, vol. ii, p. 306.)

"This Being," says Moore, (Hondo Pantheon, p. 132,) "is called Brahm, one eternal mind, the self-existing, incomprehensible Spirit. To him, however, the Hindus erect no altars. The objects of their adoration commence with the triad, - Brahma, Vishnu, and Seva, which represent the almighty powers of creation, preservation, and destruction"

The learned among the classic heathen, it is true, occasionally speak nobly concerning God and his attributes; but at the same time they were led by their own imaginations and reasonings to conclusions, which neutralize the effect of their sublimer conceptions and often contradict them.

The eternity of matter, for instance, was held by the Greek and Roman philosophers and by their preceptors in the oriental schools, who thought it absolutely impossible that

anything should be produced from nothing, thus destroying the notion of creation in its proper sense, and of a Supreme Creator. This opinion, as Bishop Stillingfleet shows, (Origines Sacm, 1. iii, c. 2,) is contrary to the omnipotence and independence of God, and is a great abatement of those correct views which the words of the ancient philosophers would seem sometimes to express. (7)

(7) When we meet with passages in the writings of heathens which recommend moral virtues,

and speak in a fit and becoming manner of God, we are apt from our more elevated knowledge of these subjects to attach more correct and precise ideas to the terms used, than the original writers themselves, and to give them credit for better views than they entertained. It is one proof, that though some of them speak, for instance, of God seeing and knowing all things, they did not conceive of the omniscience of God in the manner in which that attribute is explained by those who have learned

what God is from his own words; that some of the pagan philosophers who lived after the Christian era, complain that the Christians had introduced a very troublesome and busy God, who did "in omnium mores, actus, omnium verba denique, et occultas cogitationes diligenter inquirere, diligently inquire into the manners, actions, words, and secret thoughts of all men," Cicero, too, denies the foreknowledge of God, and for the same reason which has been urged against it in modern times

by some who, for the time at least, have closed their eyes upon the testimony of the Scriptures on this point, and been willing, in order to serve a favorite theory, to go back to the obscurity of paganism, The difficulty with him is, that prescience is inconsistent with contingency. Mihi ne in Deum cadere videatur ut sciat quid casu et fortuito futurum sit; si enim scit, certe illud eveniet; si certe eveniet, nulla fortuna est; est autem fortuna, rerum ergo fortuitarum nulla praesensio est. (De Fato. n. 12, 13.) It had another

injurious effect; it destroyed the interesting doctrine of Divine government as to those natural evils to which men are subject. These they traced to the unchangeable and eternal nature of matter, which even the Supreme God could not control. Thus Seneca says, (De Provid, cap. 5,) "that evil things happen to good men, quia non potest Artifex mutare materiam, because God the Artificer could not change matter; and that a magno Artifice multa formantur pram, many things were made ill

by the great Artificer; not that he wanted art, but through the stubbornness of matter," in which they generally agree. This opinion of theirs was brought from the oriental schools, where, it had been long received; nor was it confined to Egypt and Chaldes.

It was one of the dogmas which Confucius taught in China in the fifth century before Christ, that out of nothing that which is cannot be produced, and that material bodies must have existed from all

eternity. From this notion it follows, that there is no calamity to which we are not liable, and that God himself is unable to protect us from it. Prayer is useless, and trust in him is absurd. The noble doctrine of the infliction of misery by a wise and gracious Being for our correction and improvement, so often dwelt upon in Scripture, could have no place in a system which admitted this tenet; God could neither be "a refuge in trouble," nor a Father, "correcting us for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness."

What they knew of God was therefore, by such speculations, rendered entirely unprofitable.

But a worse consequence resulted from this opinion. By some of them the necessary obliquity and perverseness of matter was regarded not only as the source of natural, but also of moral evil; by which they either made sin necessary and irresistible, or found in this opinion much to palliate it.

Others refer moral evil to a natural principle of evil, an evil God, "emulous of the

good God,"which Plutarch says, (8) is a tradition of great antiquity, derived "from the divines ex theologos and lawgivers to the poets and philosophers, whose first author cannot be found." But whether natural and moral evil be traced to an eternal and uncontrollable matter, or to an eternal and independent anti-God, it is clear that the notion of a Supreme Deity, as contained in the Scriptures, and as conceived of by modern Theists, who have borrowed their light from them, could have no

existence in such systems; and that by making moral evil necessary, men were taught to consider it as a misfortune rather than a crime, and were thus in fact encouraged to commit it by regarding it as unavoidable.

(8) De Isid. et Osir. - Dr. Cudworth thinks that Plutarch has indulged in an overstrained assertion: but the confidence with which the philosopher speaks is at least a proof of the great extent of this opinion.

In like manner, though occasionally we find many

excellent things said of the providence of God, all these were weakened or destroyed by other opinions. The Epicurean sect denied the doctrine, and laid it down as a maxim," that what was blessed and immortal gave neither any trouble to itself nor to others;" a notion which exactly agrees with the system of the modern Hindus. "According to the doctrine of Aristotle, God resides in the celestial sphere, and observes nothing, and cares for nothing beyond himself. Residing in the first sphere,

he possesses neither immensity nor omnipresence; far removed from the inferior parts of the universe, he is not even a spectator of what is passing among its inhabitants." (Enfield's History of Philosophy, lib. ii, cap, 9.)

The Stoics contended for a providence, but in their creed it was counteracted by the doctrine of an absolute necessity, or fate, to which God and matter, or the universe, which consists, as they thought, of both, was immutably subject; and where they

allow it, they confine the care of the gods to great affairs only.

The Platonists, and the followers of Pythagoras believed that all things happened kata theios pronoia according to Divine providence; but this they overthrew by joining fortune with God.

"God, fortune, and opportunity," says Plato, "govern all the affairs of men." (Dc Leg. lib. 4.) To them also there were "Lords many and gods many:" and wherever Polytheism is admitted, it

is as destructive of the doctrine of providence as fate, though by a different process. The fatalist makes all things fixed and certain, and thus excludes government; the Polytheist gives up the government of the world to innumerable opposing and contrary wills, and thus makes everything uncertain. If the favor of one deity be propitiated, the wrath of another, equally or more powerful, may be provoked; or the gods may quarrel among themselves. Such is the only providence which can be discovered in

the Iliad of Homer, and the AEneid of Virgil, poems which unquestionably embody the popular belief of the times in which they were written. The same confused and contradictory management of the affairs of men, we see in all modem idolatrous systems, only that with length of duration they appear to have become more oppressive and distracting. Where so many deities are essentially malignant and cruel to men; where demons are supposed to have power to afflict and to destroy at pleasure; and

where aspects of the stars, and the screams of birds, and other ominous circumstances, are thought to have an irresistible influence upon the fortunes of life, and the occurrences of every day; and especially where, to crown the whole, there is an utter ignorance of one supreme controlling infinite mind, or his existence is denied; or he who is capable of exercising such a superintendence as might render him the object of hope, is supposed to be totally unconcerned with human affairs; there can be

no ground of firm trust, no settled hope, no permanent consolation.

Timidity and gloom tenant every bosom, and in many instances render life a burden. (9) (9) The testimony of missionaries, who see the actual effects of paganism in the different countries where they labor, is particularly valuable. On the point mentioned in the text, the Wesleyan missionaries thus speak of the state of the Cingalese:- "We feel ourselves incapable of giving you a full view of the

deplorable state of a people, who believe that all things are governed by chance; who find malignant gods, or devils, in every planet, whose influence over mankind they consider to be exceeding great, and the agents who inflict all the evil that men suffer in the world. A people so circumstanced need no addition to their miseries, but are objects toward which Christian pity will extend itself, as far as the voice of their case can reach. They are literally, through fear of death, or

malignant demons, all their lifetime subject to bondage."

Another great principle of religion is the doctrine of a future state of rewards and punishments; and though in some form it is recognized in pagan systems, and the traditions of the primitive ages may be traced in their extravagant perversions and fables; its evidence was either greatly diminished, or it was mixed up with notions entirely subversive of the moral effect which it

was originally intended to produce.

Of the ancient Chaldean philosophy, not much is known. In its best state it contained many of the principles of the patriarchal religion; but at length, as we find from Scripture, it degenerated into the doctrine of judicial astrology, which is so nearly allied to fatalism, as to subvert the idea of the present life being a state of probation, and the future a state of just and gracious rewards and punishments.

Ancient writers differ as to the opinions of the learned of Egypt on the human soul. Diodorus Siculus says, they believed its immortality, and the future existence of the just among the gods.

Herodotus ascribes to them the doctrine of transmigration. Both may be reconciled. The former doctrine was the most ancient; the latter was induced by that progress of error which we observe among all nations. Another subtle notion grew up with it, which infected the

philosophy of Greece, and, spreading throughout Asia, has done more to destroy the moral effect of a belief in the future existence of man, than any other. This was, "that God is the soul of the world," from which all human spirits came, and to which they will return, some immediately, and others through long courses of transmigration. The doctrine of ancient revelation, of which this was a subtle and fatal perversion, is obvious. The Scripture account is, that the human soul was from God by creation; the

refinement of pagan philosophy, that it is from him by emanation, or separation of essence, and still remains a separate portion of God, seeking its return to him. With respect to the future, revelation, always taught, that the souls of the just return to God at death, not to lose their individuality, but to be united to him in holy and delightful communion: the philosophic perversion was, that the parts so separated from God, and connected for a time with matter, would be reunited to the great source by

refusion, as a drop of water to the ocean. (1) Thus philosophy refined upon the doctrine of immortality until it converted it into annihilation itself, for so it is in the most absolute sense as to distinct consciousness and personality. The prevalence of this notion under different modifications is indeed very remarkable.

(1) "Interim tamen vix ulli fuere (quae humanae mentis caligo, atque imbecillitas est,) qui non inciderint in errorem ilium de refusione in Animam

mundi. Nimirum, sicut existimarunt singulorum animas particulas esse animae mundanae quarum quaelibet suo corpore, ut aqua vase, effluere, ac animae mundi, e qua deducta fuerit, iterum uniri." (Gassendi Animadv, in Lib. 10, Diog Laertii, p. 550.)

Bishop Warburton proves that this opinion was held not merely by the Atheistical and skeptical sects among the Greeks, but by what be calls the Philosophic Quaternion of dogmatic Theists, the four

renowned schools, the Pythagoric, the Platonic, the Peripatetic, and the Stoic; and on this ground argues, that though they taught the doctrine of future rewards and punishments to the populace, as a means of securing their obedience to the laws, they themselves did not believe what they propagated; and in this he was doubtless correct. With future reward and punishment, in the proper and commonly received sense in all ages, this notion was entirely incompatible. He observes,

"And that the reader may not suspect these kind of phrases, that the soul is part of God, discerpted from him, of his nature, which perpetually occur in the writings of the ancients, to be only highly figurate expressions, and not to be measured by the severe standard of metaphysical propriety, he is desired to take notice of one consequence drawn from this principle, and universally held by antiquity, which was this, that, the soul was eternal a parte ante, as well as a parte post, which the

Latins well express by the word sempiternus. But when the ancients are said to hold the pre and post existence of the soul, and therefore to attribute a proper eternity to it, we must not suppose that they understood it to be eternal in its distinct and peculiar existence; but that it was discerpted from the substance of God in time, and would in time be rejoined and resolved into it again; which they explained by a bottle's being filled with sea water, that swimming there awhile, on the bottle's

breaking, flowed in again, and mingled with the common mass. They only differed about the time of this reunion and resolution, the greater part holding it to be at death; but the Pythagoreans not till after many transmigrations. The Platonists went between these two opinions and rejoined pure and unpolluted souls, immediately on death, to the universal Spirit. But those which had contracted much defilement, were sent into a succession of other bodies, to purge and purify

them before they returned to their parent substance."

Some learned men have denied the consequence which Warburton wished to establish from these premises, and consider the resorption of these sages as figurative, and consequently compatible with distinct consciousness and individuality. The researches, however, since that time made into the corresponding philosophy of the Hindus, bear this acute and learned man out to the full length of his conclusion, "God, as

separated from matter, the Hindus contemplate as a being reposing in his own happiness, destitute of ideas; as infinite placidity; as an unruffled sea of bliss; as being perfectly abstracted and void of consciousness. They therefore deem it the height of perfection to be like this being. The person whose very nature, say they, is absorbed in Divine meditation; whose life is like a sweet sleep, unconscious and undisturbed; who does not even desire God, and who is changed into the image

of the ever blessed, obtains absorption into Brumhu." (Ward's View of the Hindus, 8vo, vol. ii, p. 177-8.) And that this doctrine of absorption is taken literally, is proved, not merely by the terms in which it is expressed, though these are sufficiently unequivocal; but by its being opposed by some of the followers of Vishnoo, and by a few also of their philosophers. Mr. Ward quotes Jumudugnee, as an exception to the common opinion: he says, "The idea of losing a distinct existence by

absorption, as a drop is lost in the ocean, is abhorrent. It is pleasant to feed on sweetmeats, but no one wishes to be the sweetmeat itself." So satisfactorily is this point made out against the wisdom of this world? - by it the world neither knew God nor man.

Another notion equally extensive and equally destructive of the original doctrines of the immortality of the human soul, and a state of future rewards and punishments, which sprung up in the Egyptian schools, and was

from thence transmitted into Greece, India, and throughout all Asia, was that of a periodical destruction and renovation of all things. "They conceived," says Diodorus Siculus, "that the universe undergoes a periodical conflagration, after which all things were to be restored to their primitive form, to pass again through a similar succession of changes." The primitive tenet, of which this was a corruption, is also evident; and it affords another singular instance of the subtlety and mischief of

that spirit of error which operated with so much activity in early times, that the doctrine of the destruction of the world, and the consequent termination of the probationary state of the human race preparatory to the general judgment, an awful and most salutary revelation, should have been so wrought into philosophic theory, and so surrounded with poetic embellishment, as to engage the intellect, and to attract the imagination, only the more effectually to destroy the great moral of a

doctrine which was not denied, and covertly to induce an entire unbelief in the eternal future existence of man.

As the Stoics held that all inferior divinities and human souls were portions separated from the soul of the world, and would return into the first celestial fire, so they supposed, that at the same time the whole visible world would be consumed in one general conflagration. "Then," says Seneca, "after an interval the world will be entirely

renewed, every animal will be reproduced, and a race of men free from guilt will repeople the earth. Degeneracy and corruption are however to creep in again, and the same process is to go on for ever." (Ep, 9.) This too is the Brahminical notion: "The Hindus are taught to believe that at the end of every Calpa (creation or formation) all things are absorbed in the Deity, and at a stated time the creative power will again be called into action." (Moore's Hondo Pantheon.) And though the system of the

Buddhists denies a Creator, it holds the same species of revolution. "They are of opinion that the universe is eternal least they neither know it had a beginning, or will have an end; that it is homogeneous, and composed of an infinite number of similar worlds, each of which is a likeness of the other, and each of which is in a constant state of alteration, - not stationary for a moment, - at the instant of greatest perfection beginning to decline, and at the moment of greatest chaotic ruin beginning to regenerate.

They compare such changes to a wheel in motion perpetually going round." (Dr. Davey's Account of Ceylon.)

But other instances of darkness and error among even civilized heathens respecting the human soul, and a future state are not wanting; for it is a fact which ought never to be lost sight of in these inquires that among pagans, opinions on these subjects have never been either certain or rational; and that error once received has in no instance

been exchanged for truth; but has gone on multiplying itself, and assuming an infinite variety of forms.

The doctrine of Aristotle and the Peripatetics gives no countenance to the opinion of the soul's immortality, or even of its existence after death. Democritus and his followers taught, that the soul is material and mortal; Heraclitus, that when the soul is purified from moist vapors, it returns into the soul of the universe; if not, it perishes: Epicurus and

his followers, that "when death is, we are not." The leading men among the Romans, when philosophy was introduced among them, followed the various Greek sects. We have seen the uncertainty of Cicero. (2) Pliny declares, that "non magis a morte sensus ullus aut.

(2) From the philosophical works of Cicero it may be difficult to collect his own opinions, as he chiefly occupies himself in explaining those of others; but in his epistles to his friends, when, as

Warburton observes, we see the man divested of the politician, and the sophist, he professes his disbelief of a future state in the frankest manner. Thus in lib. 6, epis. 3, to Torquatus, written in order to console him in the unfortunate state of the affairs of their party, he observes: "Sed haec consolatio levis est; illa gravior, qua te uti spero; ego certe utor. Nec enim dum ero, angar ulla re, cum omni vacem culpa; et si non ero, sensu omnino carebo. But there is another and a far higher consolation, which I hope

is your support, as it certainly is mine. For so long as I shall preserve my innocence, I will never while I exist be anxiously disturbed at any event that may happen; and if I shall cease to exist, all sensibility must cease with me."

Similar expressions are found in his letters to Toranius, to Lucius Mescinins, and others, which those who wish to prove him a believer in the soul's immortality endeavor to account for by supposing that he accommodated his

sentiments to the principles of his friends. A singular solution, and one which scarcely can be seriously adopted, since in the above cited passage he so strongly expresses what is his own opinion, and hopes that his friend takes refuge in the same consolation. It may be allowed that Cicero alternated between unbelief and doubt; but never I think between doubt and certainty. The last was a point to which he never seems to have reached aninae aut corpori quam ante natalem, the

soul and body have no more sense after death, than before we were born." (Nat. Hist, lib, 7, cap. 55.) Caesar, "that beyond death there is neque curae neque gaudio locum, neither place for care or joy." (Sallust. De Bella Catil. sec.5.) Seneca in his 102d epistle speaks of a Divine part within us, which joins us to the gods; and tells Lucilius,

"that the day which he fears as his last aeterni natalis est, is the birth-day of eternity;" but then he says, "he was willing to hope it might be so, on the

account of some great men, rem gratissimam promittentium magis quam probantium, who promised what they could not prove;" and on other occasions he speaks out plainly, and says that death makes us incapable of good or evil. The poets, it is true, spoke of a future state of rewards and punishments; they had the joys of Elysium and the tortures of Tartarus; but both philosophers and poets regarded them as vulgar fables.

Virgil does not hide this, and numerous quotations

of the same import might be given both from him and others of their poets.

"Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscero causas;

Atque metus omnes et inexorabile fatum

Subjecit pedibus, strepitumque Acherontis avari!"

- Georg. 2,1.490, &c.

Happy the man, whose vigorous soul can pierce

Through the formation of this universe,

Who nobly dares despise, with soul sedate.

The din of Acheron, and vulgar fears and fate.

- Warton.

Nor was the skepticism and unbelief of the wise and great long kept from the vulgar, among whom they wished to maintain the old superstitions as instruments by which they might be controlled. Cicero complains that the common people in his day mostly followed the doctrine of Epicurus.

Since then these erroneous and mischievous views concerning God,

providence, and a future state, or the total denial of all of them, are found to have resulted from the rejection or loss of the primitive traditions; and farther as it is clear that such errors are totally subversive of the fundamental principles of morals and religion, and afford inducement to the commission of every species of crime without remorse, or fear of punishment; the necessity of a republication of these great doctrines in an explicit and authentic manner, and of institutions

for teaching and enforcing them upon all ranks of men, is evident; and whatever proof may be adduced for the authentication of the Christian revelation, it can never be pretended, that a revelation to restore these great principles was not called for by the actual condition of man; and, in proportion to the necessity of the case, is the strength of the presumption that one has been mercifully afforded.

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07 THE NECESSITY OF REVELATION - STATE OF MORALS AMONG THE HEATHEN

If the necessity of a revelation may be argued from the confused, contradictory, and false notions of heathen nations as to the principal doctrines of religion; no less forcibly may the argument be pursued from the state of their morals both in knowledge and in practice.

This argument is simple and obvious. If the nature, extent, and obligation of

moral rules had become involved in great misapprehension and obscurity; if what they knew of right and wrong wanted an enforcement and an authority which it could not receive from their respective systems; and if, for want of efficient, counteracting religious principles, the general practice had become irretrievably vicious; a direct interposition of the Divine Being was required for the republication of moral rules and for their stronger enforcement.

The notions of all civilized heathens on moral subjects, like their knowledge of the first principles of religion, mingled as they were with their superstitions, prove that both were derived from a common source. There was a substantial agreement among them in many questions of right and wrong; but the boundaries which they themselves acknowledged were not kept up, and the rule was gradually lowered to the practice, though not in all cases so as entirely to

efface the original communication.

This is an important consideration, inasmuch as it indicates the transmission of both religion and morals from the patriarchal system, and that both the primitive doctrines and their corresponding morals received early sanctions, the force of which was felt through succeeding ages. It shows too, that even the heathen have always been under a moral government. The laws of God have never been quite obliterated,

though their practice has ever been below their knowledge, and though the law itself was greatly and willfully corrupted through the influence of their vicious inclinations.

This subject may perhaps be best illustrated by adverting to some of the precepts of the Second Table, which embodied the morals of the patriarchal ages, under a new sanction. Of the obligation of these, all heathen nations have been sensible; and yet, in all, the rule was perverted

in theory and violated in practice.

Murder has, in all ages and among all civilized and most savage heathen nations also, been regarded as an atrocious crime; and yet the rule was so far accommodated to the violent and ferocious habits of men, as to fill every heathen land with blood guiltiness. The slight regard paid to the life of man, in all heathen countries, cannot have escaped the notice of reflecting minds. They knew the rule; but the act,

under its grosser and more deliberate forms only, was thought to violate it. Among the Romans, men were murdered in their very pastimes, by being made to fight with wild beasts and with each other, and though this was sometimes condemned, as a "spectaculum crudele et inhumanum," yet the passion for blood increased, and no war ever caused so great a slaughter as did the gladiatorial combats. They were at first confined to the funerals of great persons. The first show of this kind exhibited

in Rome by the Bruti, on the death of their father, consisted of three couples, but afterward the number greatly increased. Julius Caesar presented 300 pairs of gladiators; and the Emperor Trajan, 10,000 of them, for the entertainment of the people. - Sometimes these horrid exhibitions, in which, as Seneca says, "Homo, sacra res, homo jam per lusum et jocum occiditur," when the practice had attained its height, deprived Europe of 20,000 lives in one month. (3) This is farther

illustrated by the treatment of slaves, which composed so large a portion of the population of ancient states. (4) They knew and acknowledged the evil of murder, and had laws for its punishment; but to this despised class of human beings they did not extend the rule; nor was killing them accounted murder, any more than the killing of a beast. The master had absolute power of life, or death, or torture; and their lives were therefore sacrificed in the most wanton manner. (5)

By various sophistries, suggested by their vices, their selfishness, and their cruelty, the destruction of children also, under certain circumstances, ceased to be regarded as a crime. In many heathen nations it was allowed to destroy the fetus in the womb; to strangle, or drown, or expose infants, especially if sickly or deformed; and that which, in Christian states, is considered as the most atrocious of crimes, was, by the most celebrated of ancient pagan nations, esteemed a wise and political expedient to rid

the state of useless or troublesome members and was even enjoined by some of their most celebrated sages and legislators. The same practice continues to this day in a most, affecting extent, not only among uncivilized pagans, but also among the Hindus and the Chinese.

(3) Though Cicero, Seneca, and others, condemned these barbarities, it was in so incidental and indifferent a manner as to produce no effect. They were abolished soon after the establishment of

Christianity, and this affords an illustration of the admission of Rousseau himself. "La philosophie ne peut faire aucun bien, que la Religion ne le fasse encore mieux; et la Religion en fait beaucoup que la philosophie ne sauroit faire."

(4) In the 110th Olympiad, there were at Athens only 21,000 citizens and 40,000 slaves. It was common for a private citizen of Rome to have 10 or 20,000. (Taylor's Civil Law,) (5) The youth of Sparta made it their pastime frequently

to lie in ambush by night for the slaves, and sally out with daggers upon every Helot who came near them, and murder him in cold blood.

The Ephori, as soon as they entered upon their office declared war against them in form, that there might be an appearance of destroying them legally. It was the custom for Vedius Pollio, when his slaves had committed a fault, sometimes a very trifling one, to order them to be thrown into his fish-ponds, to feed his lampreys. It was

the constant custom, as we learn from Tacitus, Annal. xiv, 43, when a master was murdered in his own house, to put all the slaves to death indiscriminately. For a just and affecting account of the condition of slaves in ancient states, see Porteus's Beneficial Effects of Christianity.

This practice of perverting and narrowing the extent of the holy law of God, which had been transmitted to them, was exemplified also in the allowing, or rather

commending the practice of suicide.

Doubtless, the primitive law against murder condemned also Hatred and Revenge. Our Lord restored it to its true meaning among the Jews; and that it was so understood even among the ancient heathens, is clear from a placable and forgiving spirit being sometimes praised, and the contrary censured by their sages, moralists, and poets. Yet not only was the rule violated almost universally in practice; but it was also

disputed and denied in many of its applications by the authority of their wise and learned men; so that, as far as the authority of moral teachers went, a full scope was given for the indulgence of hatred, malice, and insatiate revenge. One of the qualities of the good man described by Cicero is, that he hurts no one, except he be injured himself. "Qui nemini nocet, nisi lacessitus injuria;" and he declares as to himself, "sic ulciscar facinora singula quemadmodum a quibusque sum provocatus:

I will revenge all injuries, according as I am provoked by any;" and Aristotle speaks of meekness as a defect, because the meek man will not avenge himself, and of revenge, as "anthropikoteron mallon, a more manly thing." (Moral. 1. 4, c. 11.)

"Thou shalt not commit adultery," was another great branch of the patriarchal law, existing before the Decalogue, as appears from the sacred history. It forbids uncleanness of every kind, in thought and deed, and

specially guards the sanctity of marriage: nor is there any precept more essential to public morals, and to the whole train of personal, social, domestic, and national virtues.

It is not necessary to bring detailed proof of the almost universal gross, and habitual violation of this sacred law in all pagan nations, both ancient and modern, from its first stages down to crimes oara thnsin. This is sufficiently notorious to all acquainted with the history of the ancient and modern pagan

world; and will not be denied by any. It is only requisite to show that they had the law, and that it was weakened and corrupted, so as to render a republication necessary.

The public laws against adultery in almost all heathen states, and the censures of moralists and satirists, are sufficiently in proof that such a law was known; and the higher the antiquity of the times, the more respect we see paid to chastity, and the better was the practice. Nor was the act only considered by

some of their moralists as sinful; but the thought and desire, as may be observed in passages both in Greek and Roman writers. But as to this vice, too, as well as others, the practice lowered the rule; and the authority of one lawgiver and moralist being neutralized by another, license was given to unbounded offence.

Divorce, formerly permitted only in cases of adultery, became at length a mere matter of caprice, and that both with Jews and Gentiles: and among

the latter, adultery was chiefly interpreted as the violation of the marriage covenant by the wife only, or by the man with a married woman, thus leaving the husband a large license officious indulgence. To whoredom and similar vices, lawgivers, statesmen, philosophers, and moralists gave the sanction of their opinions and their practice which foul blot of ancient heathenism continues to this day, to mark the morals of pagan countries. (6)

In most civilized states the very existence of society, and the natural selfishness of man, led to the preservation of the ancient laws against theft and rapine, and to the due execution of the statutes made against them; but in this also we see the same disposition to corrupt the original prohibition. It was not extended to strangers or to foreign countries; nor was it generally interpreted to reach to anything more than flagrant acts of violence. Usury, extortion, and fraud were rather regarded as laudatory acts,

than as injurious to character; and so they continue to be esteemed wherever Christianity has not issued her authoritative laws against injustice in all its degrees. Throughout India, there is said to be scarcely such a thing as common honesty.

Another great branch of morality is Truth; but on the obvious obligation to speak it, we find the same laxity both of opinion and practice; and in this, heathenism presents a striking contrast to Christianity, which

commands us "to speak the truth one to another" and denounces damnation against him that "loves or makes a lie."

(6) Terence says of simple fornication, "Non est scelus, adolescentulum scor tari flagitium est."

The Spartans, through a principle in the institutions of Lycurgus, which controlled their ancient opinions on this subject, in certain pre-scribed cases, allowed adultery in the wife; and Plutarch, in his Life of Lycurgus, mentioning these laws,

commends them as being made "phusikos kai politikos according to nature and polity," Callicratides, the Pythagorean, tells the wife that she must bear with her husband's irregularities, since the law allows this to the man and not to the woman. Plutarch speaks to the same purpose in several places of his writings. On the other hand, some of the philosophers condemned adultery; and in many places, it was punished in the woman with death, in the man with infamy. Still,

however, the same vacillation of judgment, and the same limitations, of what they sometimes confess to be the ancient rule and custom, may be observed throughout; but as far as the authority of philosophers went, it was chiefly on the side of vicious practice.

They knew that "tollendum est ex rebus contrahendis omne mendacium, (Cic. de Off. 1. iii, n. 81,) no lie was to be used in contracts;" and that an honest man should do and speak nothing in falsehood and

with hypocrisy; but they more frequently departed from this rule than enjoined it.

The rule of Menander was, "a lie is better than a hurtful truth." Plato says, "he may lie who knows how to do it in a fit season;" and Maximus Tyrius, "that there is nothing decorous in truth, but when it is profitable;" and both Plato and the Stoics frame a jesuitical distinction between lying with the lips and in the mind. Deceit and falsehood have been therefore the character of

all pagan nations, and continue so to be to this day. This is the character of the Chinese, as given by the best authorities; and of the Hindus it is stated by the most respectable Europeans, not merely missionaries, but by those who have long held official, civil, and judicial situations among them, that their disregard of truth is uniform and systematic. When discovered it causes no surprise in the one party, or humiliation in the other. Even when they have truth to tell, they seldom fail to bolster it up with

some appended falsehoods. (7)

Nor can the force of the argument in favor of the necessity of a direct revelation of the will of God by these facts be weakened by alleging, what is unhappily too true, that where the Christian revelation has been known, great violations of all these rules have been commonly observed; for, not to urge the moral superiority of the worst of Christian states, in all of them the authority and sanction of religion is directed against vice; while

among heathens, their religion itself, having been corrupted by the wickedness of man, has become the great instrument of encouraging every species of wickedness. This circumstance so fully demonstrates the necessity of an interposition on the part of God to restore truth to the world, that it deserves a particular consideration

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08 THE NECESSITY OF REVELATION - RELIGIONS OF THE HEATHEN

That the religions which have prevailed among pagan nations have been destructive of morality, cannot be denied.

(7) "It is the business of all," says Sir John Shore," from the Ryot to the Dewan, to conceal and deceive. The simplest matters of fact are designedly covered with a veil, which no human understanding can penetrate." The prevalence

of perjury is so universal, as to involve the judges in extreme perplexity. "The honest men," says Mr. Strachey, "as well as the rogues, are perjured.

Even where the real facts are sufficient to convict the offender, the witnesses against him must add others, often notoriously false, or utterly incredible; such as in Europe would wholly invalidate their testimony."

How far the speculative principles which they embodied had this effect, has already been shown;

we proceed to their more direct influence.

The gloomy superstition, which pervaded most of them, festered ferocious and cruel dispositions.

The horrible practice of offering human sacrifices prevailed throughout every region of the heathen world, to a degree which is almost incredible; and it still prevails in many populous countries where Christianity has not yet been made known. There are incontestable proofs of its having subsisted among the Egyptians, the Syrians,

the Persians the Phenicians, and all the various nations of the east. It was one of the crying sins of the Canaanites. The contagion spread over every part of Asia, Africa, and Europe. The Greeks and Romans, though less involved in this guilt than many other nations, were not altogether untainted with it. On great and extraordinary occasions, they had recourse to what was esteemed the most efficacious and most meritorious sacrifice that could be offered to the gods, the effusion of

human blood. (5) But among more barbarous nations, this practice took a firmer root. The Scythians and Thracians, the Gauls and the Germans, were strongly addicted to it; and our own island, under the gloomy and ferocious despotism of the Druids, was polluted with the religious murder of its inhabitants. In the semi-civilized kingdoms on the western side of Africa, as Dahomy, Ashantee, and others, many thousands fall every year victims to superstition. In America, Montezuma offered 20,000

victims yearly to the sun; and modern navigators have found the practice throughout the whole extent of the vast Pacific Ocean. As for India, the cries of its abominable and cruel superstitions have been sounded repeatedly in the ears of the British public and its legislature; and, including infants and widows, not fewer than 10,000 lives fall a sacrifice to idolatry in our eastern dominions yearly! (9)

The influence of these practices in obdurating the heart, and disposing it to

habitual cruelty, need not be pointed out; but the religions of paganism have been as productive of impurity as of blood.

The Floralia among the Romans were celebrated for four days together by the most shameless actions; and their mysteries in every country, whatever might be their original intent, became horribly corrupt. It was in the temples of many of their deities, and on their religious festivals, that every kind of impurity was most practiced; and this

continues to the present day throughout all the regions of modern paganism. (1)

(8) Plutarch in the Lives of Themistocles, Marcellus, and Aristides. (Livy L 22, c. 57; Florus 1.1, c. 13; Virg. AEn, x, 518, xi, 81.)

(9) See Maurice's Indian Antiquities; the writings of Dr. Claudius Buchanan; Ward on the Hindus; Dubois on Hondo Manners, &c; Robertson's History of America; Bowditch's Account of Ashantee; Moore's Hondo Pantheon; and Porteus and

This immoral tendency of their religion was confirmed and perfected by the very character and actions of their gods, whose names were perpetually in their mouths; and whose murderous or obscene exploits, whose villanies and chicaneries, whose hatreds and strifes, were the subject of their popular legends; which made up in fact the only theology, if so it may be called, of the body of the people. That they should be better than

their gods, was not to be expected, and worse they could not be. Deities with such attributes could not but corrupt, and be appealed to, not merely to excuse, but to sanctify the worst practices. (2)

Let this argument then be summed up.

All the leading doctrines on which religion rests, had either been corrupted by a groveling and immoral superstition, among heathen nations; or the philosophic speculations of their wisest men had introduced principles

destructive of man's accountability and present and future hope. On morals themselves, the original rules were generally perverted, limited, or rejected; while the religious rites, and the legendary character of the deities worshipped, to the exclusion of the true God, gave direct incitement and encouragement to vice. Thus the grossest ignorance on Divine subjects universally prevailed; the learned were involved in inextricable perplexities; and the unlearned received as truth

the most absurd and monstrous fables, all of them, however, favorable to vicious indulgence. The actual state of morals also accorded with the corrupt religious systems, and the lax moral principles which they adopted; so that in every heathen state of ancient times, the description of the Apostle Paul in the first chapter of Romans is supported by the evidence of their own historians and poets. The same may also be affirmed of modern pagan countries, whose moral condition may explain more fully, as

they are now so well-known through our intercourse with them, the genius and moral tendency of the ancient idolatries, with which those of India, and other parts of the east especially, so exactly agree.

(1) See Leland and Whitby, on the Necessity of a Revelation; and the writers on the customs of India, - Ward, Dubois, Buchanan, and Moore, before referred to.

(2) Hence Chaerea, in Terence, pertinently enough asks, Quod fecit is qui templa caeli snmma

sonitu concutit, ego homuncio non facerem? Eunuch. Act. 3, sec. 5. He only imitated Jupiter.

And says Sextus Empyricus, "That cannot be unjust which is done by the God Mercury, the prince of thieves, for how can a God be wicked?" (Apud. Euseb. Praep, lib. 6, cap. 10.) These are the facts. They affect not a small portion of mankind, but all who have not had the benefits of the doctrines and morals of the Holy Scriptures. There are no exceptions from this of

any consequence to the argument, though some difference in the morals of heathen states may be allowed. Where the Scriptures are unknown, there is not, nor ever has been since the corruption of the primitive religion, a religious system which has contained just views of God and religious truth, the Theists of the present day being judges;- none which has enjoined a correct morality, or even opposed any effectual barrier against the deterioration of public manners. These facts cannot be denied: for

the allegations formerly made of the morality of modern pagan nations have been sufficiently refuted by a better acquaintance with them; and the conclusion is irresistible, that an express revelation of the will of God, accompanied with efficient corrective institutions, was become necessary, and is still demanded by the ignorance and vices, the miseries and disorders of every part of the earth into which Christianity has not been introduced.

But we may go another step. This exhibition of the moral condition of those nations who have not had the benefit of the renewal and republication of the truths of the patriarchal religion, not only supports the conclusion that new and direct revelations from God were necessary; but the wants, which that condition so obviously created, will support other presumptions as to the nature and mode of that revelation, in the case of such a gift being bestowed in the exercise of the Divine mercy for if there is

ground to presume that almighty God, in his compassion for his creatures, would not leave them to the unchecked influence of error and vice; nor, upon the corruption of that simple, but comprehensive doctrine, worship and morals, communicated to the progenitors of all those great branches of the family of man which have been spread over the earth, refuse to interpose to renew and to perfect that religious system which existed in an elementary form in the earliest ages,

and give to it a form less liable to alteration and decay than when left to be transmitted by tradition alone; there is equal ground to presume, that the revelation, whenever vouchsafed, should be of that nature, and accompanied by such circumstances, as would most effectually accomplish this benevolent purpose.

Presumptions as to the manner in which such a revelation would be made most effectually to accomplish its ends, are

indeed to be guarded, lest we should set up ourselves as adequate judges in a case which involves large views and extensive bearings of the Divine government. But without violating this rule, it may, from the obviousness of the case, be presumed, that such a supernatural manifestation of truth should, 1, contain explicit information on those important subjects on which mankind had most greatly and most fatally erred. 2. That it should accord with the principles of former revelations, given

to men in the same state of guilt and moral incapacity as we find them in the present day. 3. That it should have a satisfactory external authentication.

4. That it should contain provisions for its effectual promulgation among all classes of men. All this, allowing the necessity and the probability of a supernatural communication of the will of God, must certainly be expected; and if the Christian revelation bears this character, it has certainly these

presumptions in its favor, that it meets an obvious case of necessity, and confers the advantages just enumerated.

1. It gives information on those subjects which are most important to man, and which the world had darkened with the greatest errors-the nature and perfections, claims and relations of God-His Will (3) as the Rule of moral good and evil-the means of obtaining Pardon and of conquering vice - the true Mediator between God and man-Divine Providence-

the Chief Good of man, respecting which alone more than three hundred different opinions among the ancient sages have been reckoned up-man's Immortality and accountability, and a Future State.

(3) See note A at the end of the chapter.

2. It is also required that a revelation should accord with the principles of former revelations, should any have been given.

For since it is a first principle that God cannot

err himself, nor deceive us, so far as one revelation renews or explains any truth in a preceding one, it must agree with the previous communication; and in what it adds to a preceding revelation, it cannot contradict anything which it contains, if it be exhibited as a truth of unchangeable character or a duty of perpetual obligation.

Now whatever direct proof may be adduced in favor of the Divine authority of the Jewish and Christian revelations, this at least

may be confidently urged as evidence in their favor, that they have a substantial agreement and harmony among themselves, and with that ancient traditional system which existed in the earliest ages, and the fragments of which we find scattered among all nations. As to the patriarchal system of religion, to which reference has been so often made, beside the notices of it which are everywhere scattered in the book of Genesis, we have ample and most satisfactory information in the ancient

book of Job, of which sufficient evidence may be given that it was written not later than the time of Moses; and that Job himself lived between the flood of Noah and the call of Abraham. Of the religion of the patriarchs, as it existed just at that period when Sabianism, or the worship of the heavenly luminaries, began to make its appearance, and was restrained by the authority of the "judges" who were the heads of tribes or families, and as it existed in the preceding ages, as we find from the reference

made by Job and his friends to the authority of their "fathers" this book contains an ample and most satisfactory record; and from this venerable relic a very copious body of doctrinal and practical theology might be collected; but the following particulars will be sufficient for the present argument:-

One Supreme Being alone is recognized throughout, as the object of adoration, worship, hope, trust, and fear; who is represented as of infinite and

unsearchable majesty, - eternal, omnipresent, omniscient, almighty, and of perfect wisdom, justice, goodness; governing all things, noting and judging individuals, regarding the good, punishing the wicked, placable, listening to the prayers of the penitent. The natural corruption of man's nature is also stated; and his own inability to cleanse his heart from sin. Man, we are told, cannot be just with God, and therefore needs an intercessor. Sacrifices, as of Divine appointment, and propitiatory in their

nature, are also adverted to as commonly practiced. Express reference is made to a Divine Redeemer and his future incarnation, as an object of hope. The doctrines of an immortal spirit in man, and of the resurrection of the body, and a future judgment, have all a place in this system.

Creation is ascribed to God; and not only the general doctrine of Providence, but that most interesting branch of it, the connection of dispensations of prosperity

and affliction with moral ends. Murder, theft, oppression, injustice, adultery, intemperance, are all pointed out as violations of the laws of God; and also wrath, envy, and other evil passions. Purity of heart, kindness, compassion to the poor, &c, are spoken of as virtues of the highest obligation; and the fear and love of God are enjoined, with a calm and cheerful submission to his will, in humble trust that the darkness of present events will be ultimately cleared up, and shown to be consistent with the

wisdom, justice, holiness, and truth of God. The same points of doctrine and morals may also be collected from the book of Genesis.

Such was the comprehensive system of patriarchal theology; and it is not necessary to stop to point out, that these great principles are all recognized and taken up in the successive revelations by Moses and by Christ, - exhibiting three religious systems, varying greatly in circumstances; introduced at widely distant periods,

and by agents greatly differing in their condition and circumstances; but exactly harmonizing in every leading doctrinal tenet, and agreeing in their great moral impression upon mankind-Perfect Purity Of Heart And Conduct.

3. That it should be accompanied with an explicit and impressive external authentication, of such a nature as to make its truth obvious to the mass of mankind, and to leave no reasonable doubt of its Divine authority.

The reason of this is evident. A mere impression of truth on the understanding could not by itself be distinguished from a discovery made by the human intellect, and could have no authority, as a declaration of the will of a superior, with the person receiving it; and as to others, it could only pass for the opinion of the individual who might promulge it (Vide chap. 3.) An authentication of a system of truth, which professes to be the will, the law, of him who, having made, has the right to

command us, external to the matter of the doctrine itself, is therefore necessary to give it authority, and to create the obligation of obedience. This accords with the opinion of all nations up to the earliest ages, and was so deeply wrought in the common sense of mankind, that all the heathen legislators of antiquity affected a Divine commission, and all false religions have leaned for support upon pretended supernatural sanctions. The proofs of this are so numerous and well known,

that it is unnecessary to adduce them.

The authority of the ancient patriarchal religion rested on proof external to itself. We do not now examine the truth of its alleged authentications, - they were admitted; and the force, of the revelation depended upon them in the judgment of mankind. We have a most ancient book, which records the opinions of the ante-Mosaic again The theology of those ages has been stated; and from the history contained in that book we learn, that the

received opinion, was, that the almighty Lawgiver himself conversed with our first parents and with the patriarchs, under celestial appearances; and that his mercies to men, or his judgments, failed not to follow ordinarily the observance or violation of the laws thus delivered, which was in fact an authentication of them renewed from time to time. The course of nature, displaying the eternal power and Godhead, as well as the visitations of Providence, was to them a constant confirmation of

several of the leading truths in the theology they had received; and by the deep impress of Divinity which this system received in the earliest ages from the attestations of singular judgments, and especially the flood, it is only rationally to be accounted for, that it was universally transmitted, and waged so long a war against religious corruptions.

But notwithstanding the authentication of the primitive religion as, a matter of Divine revelation, and the effects produced by

it in the world for many ages; and indeed still produced by it in its very broken and corrupted state, in condemning many sinful actions, so as to render the crimes of heathens without excuse; that system was traditional, and liable to be altered by transmission.

In proportion also as historical events were confounded by the lapse of time, and as the migrations and political convulsions of nations gave rise to fabulous stories, the external authenticating

evidence became weak, and thus a merciful interposition on the part of God was, as we have seen, rendered necessary by the general ignorance of mankind. Indeed the primitive revelations supposed future ones, and were not in themselves regarded as complete. But if a republication only of the truth had been necessary, the old external evidence was so greatly weakened by the lapse of ages, which as to most nations had broken the line of historical testimony on which it so greatly rested,

that it required a new authentication, in a form adapted to the circumstances of the world; and if an enlarged revelation were vouchsafed, every addition to the declared will of God needed an authentication of the same kind as at first.

If we presume, therefore, that a new revelation was necessary, we must presume, that, when given, it would have an external authentication as coming from God, from which there could be no reasonable appeal; and we

therefore conclude, that as the Mosaic and Christian revelations profess both to republish and to enlarge former revelations, the circumstance of their resting their claims on the external evidence of miracles and prophecy is a presumption in their favor.

Whether the evidence which they offer be decisive or not, is a future question; but in exhibiting such evidence, they accord with the reason of, the thing, and with the common sense of all ages.

4. It is farther presumed, that, should a revelation of religious truth and the will of God be made, it would provide means for its effectual communication to all classes of men.

As the revelation supposed must be designed to restore and enlarge the communications of truth, and as, from the increase and dispersion of the human race, tradition had become an imperfect medium of conveying it, it is a fair presumption, that the persons through whom the communication was

made should record it in Writing, a revelation to every individual could not maintain the force of its original authentication; because as its attestation must be of a supernatural kind, its constant recurrence would divest it of that character, or weaken its force by bringing it among common and ordinary events. A revelation on the contrary too few, properly and publicly attested by super natural occurrences, needed not repetition; but the most natural and effectual mode of

preserving the communication, once made, would be to transmit it by writing. Any corruption of the record would be rendered impracticable by its being publicly taught in the first instance; by a standard copy being preserved with care; or by such a number of copies being dispersed as to defy material alteration. This presumption is realized also in the Jewish and Christian revelations; as will be seen when the subject of the authority of the Holy Scriptures comes

to be discussed. They were first publicly taught, then committed to writing, and the copies were multiplied.

Another method of preserving and diffusing the knowledge of a revelation once made, would be, the institution of public commemorative rites, at once preserving the memory of the fact, and of the doctrine connected with it, among great bodies of people, and leading them to such periodical inquiries as might preserve both with the greatest accuracy. These also we

find in the institutions of Moses, and of Christ; and their weight in the argument for the truth of the mission of each, will be adduced in its proper place.

Allowing it to be reasonable to presume, that a revelation would be vouchsafed; it is equally so to presume, that it should contain some injunctions favorable to its propagation among men of all ranks, for as the compassion of God to the moral necessities of his creatures, generally, is the ground on which so great a favor rests, we

cannot suppose, that one class of men should be allowed to make a monopoly of this advantage; and this would be a great temptation to them to publish their own favorite or interested opinions under a pretended Divine sanction, and tend to counteract the very purpose for which a revelation was given. Such a monopoly was claimed by the priests of ancient pagan nations; and that fatal effect followed. It was claimed for a time by a branch of the Christian priesthood, contrary to the

obligations of the institution itself; and the consequences were similar. Among the heathens, the effect of this species of monopoly was, that those who encouraged superstition and ignorance among the people, speedily themselves lost the truth, which, through a wicked policy, they concealed; and the case might have been the same in Christendom, but for the sacred records, and for those witnesses to the truth who prophesied and suffered, more or less, throughout the darkest ages. (4)

(4) Bishop Warburton endeavors to prove, by an elaborate argument in his "Divine Legation,"

that in the Greater Mysteries, the Divine Unity and the errors of Polytheism were constantly taught. This, however, is most satisfactorily disproved by Dr. Leland, in his "Advantage and Necessity of a Divine Revelation;" to both of which works the reader is referred for information as to those singular institutions-the heathen mysteries.

This reasonable expectation also is realized in the Mosaic and Christian revelations;- both provided for their general publication-both instituted an order of men, not to conceal, but to read and teach the truth committed to them-both recognized a right in the people to search the record, and by it to judge of the ministration of the priests-both made it obligatory on the people to be taught-and both separated one day in seven to afford leisure for that purpose.

Nothing but such a revelation, and with such accompanying circumstances, appears capable of reaching the actual case of mankind and of effectually instructing and bringing them under moral control; (5) and, whether the Bible can be proved to be of Divine authority or not, this at least must be granted, that it presents itself to us under these circumstances, and claims, for this very reason, the most serious and unprejudiced attention.

(5) See note B at the end of the chapter.

Note A. - Page 63.

Different opinions have been held as to the ground of moral obligation, Grotius, Balguy, and Dr.

S. Clarke, place it in the eternal and necessary fitness of things. To this there are two objections.

The First is, that it leaves the distinction between virtue and vice, in a great measure, arbitrary and indefinite, dependent upon our perception of fitness and unfitness, which, in

different individuals, will greatly differ. The Second is, that when a fitness or unfitness is proved, it is no more than the discovery of a natural essential difference or congruity, which alone cannot constitute a moral obligation to choose what is fit, and to reject what is unfit. When we have proved a fitness in a certain course of action, we have not proved that it is obligatory. A second step is necessary before we can reach this conclusion. Cudworth, Butler, Price, and others, maintain, that

virtue carries its own obligation in itself; that the understanding at once perceives a certain action to be right, and therefore it ought to be performed. Several objections lie to this notion. 1. It supposes the understandings of men to determine precisely in the same manner concerning all virtuous and vicious actions, which is contrary to fact. 2. It supposes a previous rule, by which the action is determined to be right; but if the revealed will of God is not to be taken into consideration, what

common rule exists among men? There is evidently no such rule, and therefore no means of certainly determining what is right. 3. If a common standard were known among men, and if the understandings of men determined in the same manner as to the conformity, otherwise, of an action to that standard; what renders it a matter of obligation that any one should perform it? The rule must be proved to be binding, or no ground of obligation is established.

An action is obligatory, say others, because it is agreeable to the moral sense. This is the theory of Lord Shaftesbury and Dr. Hutchinson. By moral sense appears to be meant an instinctive approbation of right, and abhorrence of wrong, prior to all reflection on their nature, or their consequences. If anything else were understood by it, then the moral sense must be the same with conscience, which we know to vary with the judgment, and cannot therefore be the basis of moral obligation. If

conscience be not meant, then the moral sense must be considered as instinctive, a notion, certainly, which is disproved by the whole moral history of man. It may, indeed, be conceded, that such is the constitution of the human soul, that when those distinctions between actions, which have been taught by religious tradition or direct revelation, are known in their nature, relations, and consequences, the calm and sober judgments of men will approve of them;

and that especially when they are considered abstractedly, that is, as not affecting and controlling their own interests and passions immediately virtue may command complacency, and vice provoke abhorrence; but that, independent of reflection on their nature or their consequences, there is an instinctive principle in man which abhors evil, and loves good, is contradicted by that variety of opinion and feeling on the vices and virtues, which obtains among all uninstructed

nations. We applaud the forgiveness of an injury as magnanimous; a savage despises it as mean. We think it a duty to support and cherish aged parents; many nations, on the contrary, abandon them as useless, and throw them to the beasts of the field. Innumerable instances of this contrariety might be adduced, which are all contrary to the notion of instinctive sentiment Instincts operate uniformly, but this assumed moral sense does not. Beside, if it, be mere matter of feeling,

independent of judgment, to love virtue, and abhor vice, the morality of the exercise of this principle is questionable; for it would be difficult to show, that there is any more morality, properly speaking, in the affections and disgusts of instinct than in those of the palate. If judgment, the knowledge and comparison of things, be included, then this principle supposes a uniform and universal individual revelation, as to the nature of things, to every man, or an intuitive faculty of determining their moral quality; both of

which are too absurd to be maintained.

The only satisfactory conclusion on this subject is that which refers moral obligation to the will, of God. "Obligation," says Warburton, "necessarily implies an obliger, and the obliger must be different from, and not one and the same with, the obliged. Moral obligation, that is, the obligation of a free agent, farther implies a law, which enjoins and forbids; but a law is the imposition of an intelligent superior, who hath power

to exact conformity thereto." This lawgiver is God: and whatever may be the reasons which have led him to enjoin this, and to prohibit that, it is plain that the obligation to obey lies not merely in the fitness and propriety of a creature obeying an infinitely wise and good Creator, though such a fitness exists; but in that obedience being enjoined.

Some, allowing this, would push the matter farther, in search of a more remote ground of obligation. They put the question, "Why am

I obliged to obey the will of God?" and give us the answer, "Because obedience to the commands of a benevolent God must be productive of the agent's happiness on the whole." But this is putting out to sea again; for, 1. It cannot be proved that the consideration of our own happiness is a ground of moral obligation at all, except in some such vague sense as we use the term obligation when we say, "We are obliged to take exercise, if we would preserve our health." 2. We should be in danger of

setting up a standard, by which to judge of the propriety of obeying God, when, indeed, we are but inadequate judges of what is for our happiness, on the whole: or, 3. It would make moral obligation to rest upon our faith, that God can will only our happiness, which is a singular principle on which to build our obedience.

On the contrary, the simple principle that moral obligation rests upon the will of God, by whatever means that will may be known, is unclogged with

any of these difficulties. For, 1. It is founded on a clear principle of justice. He who made has an absolute property in us, and may therefore command us, and having actually commanded us, we cannot set up any claim of exemption-we are his. 2. He has connected reward with obedience and punishment with disobedience, and therefore made it necessary for us to obey, if we would secure, our own happiness. Thus we are obliged, both by the force of the abstract principle, and by the

motive resulting from a sanctioned command; or, in the language of the schools, we are obliged in reason, and obliged in interest, but each obligation evidently emanates from the will of God.

Other considerations, such as the excellence and beauty of virtue, its tendency to individual happiness and universal order, &c, may smooth the path of obedience, and render "his commandments joyous;" but the obligation, strictly

speaking, can only rest in the will of the superior and commanding power.

Note B-Page 67.

Though some will allow the ignorance of former times, they think that the improved reason of man is now more adequate to the discovery of moral truth.

"They contend, that the world was then in the infancy of knowledge; and, argue, as if the illustrious sages of old, (whom they nevertheless sometimes extol, in terms of extravagant panegyric,)

were very babes in philosophy, such as the wise ones of later ages regard with a sort of contemptuous commiseration.

"But, may we not be permitted to ask, whence this assumed superiority of modern over ancient philosophers has arisen? and whence the extraordinary influx of light upon these latter times has been derived? Is there any one so infatuated by his admiration of the present age, as seriously to think, that the intellectual

powers of man are stronger and more perfect now than they were wont to be; or that the particular talents of himself, or any of his contemporaries, are superior to those which shone forth in the luminaries of the Gentile world? Do the names even of Locke, Cudworth, Cumberland, Clarke, Wilkins, or Wollaston, (men so justly eminent in modern times, and who labored so indefatigably to perfect the theory of natural religion,) convey to us an idea of greater intellectual ability than

those of the consummate masters of the Portico, the Grove, or the Lyceum? How is it, then, that the advocates for the natural perfection, of perfectibility, of human reason, do not perceive, that for all the superiority of the present over former times, with respect to religious knowledge, we must be indebted to some intervening cause, and not to any actual enlargement of the human faculties? Is it to be believed, that any man of the present age, of whatever natural talents he may be possessed, could

have advanced one step beyond the heathen philosophers in his pursuit of Divine truth, had he lived in their times, and enjoyed only the light that was bestowed upon them? Or can it be fairly proved, that, merely by the light of nature, or by reasoning upon such data only as men possess who never heard of revealed religion, any moral or religious truth has been discovered since the days when Athens and Rome affected to give laws to the intellectual, as well as to the political world? That great improvements

have since been made, in framing systems of ethics, of metaphysics, and of what is called natural theology, need not be denied. But these improvements may easily be traced to one obvious cause, the widely diffused light of the Gospel, which, having shone, with more or less luster, on all nations, has imparted, even to the most simple and illiterate of the sons of men, such a degree of knowledge on these subjects, as, without it, would be unattainable by the most learned and

profound." (Van Mildert's Boyle's Lect.)

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09 THE EVIDENCES NECESSARY TO AUTHENTICATE A REVELATION - EXTERNAL EVIDENCE

The evidence usually offered in proof of the Divine authority of the Scriptures, may be divided into External, Internal, and Collateral. The external evidence consists of miracles and prophecy, the internal evidence is drawn

from the consideration of the doctrines taught, as being consistent with the character of God, and tending to promote the virtue and happiness of man; and the collateral evidence arises from a variety of circumstances, which, less directly than the former, prove the revelation to be of Divine authority, but are yet supposed to be of great weight in the argument. On each of these kinds of evidence we shall offer some general remarks, tending to prepare the way for a demonstration of the

Divine authority of the Holy Scriptures.

The principal and most appropriate evidences of a revelation from God must be external to the revelation itself. This has been before stated; but it may require a larger consideration.

A Divine revelation has been well defined to be "a discovery of some proposition to the mind, which came not in by the usual exercise of its faculties, but by some miraculous Divine interposition and

attestation, either mediate or immediate." (Doddridge's Lectures, part 5, definition 68.) It is not thought necessary to attempt to prove such a revelation possible; for, as our argument is supposed to be with a person who acknowledges, not only that there is a God, but that he is the Creator of men; it would be absurd in such a one to deny, that he who gave us minds capable of knowledge is not able, instantly and immediately, to convey knowledge to us; and that he who has given us the power of

communicating ideas to each other, should have no means of communicating with us immediately from himself.

We need not inquire whether external evidence of a revelation is in all cases requisite to him who immediately and at first receives it; for the question is not, whether private revelations have ever been made by God to individuals, and what evidence is required to authenticate them; but what is the kind of evidence which we ought to

require of one who professes to have received a revelation of the will of God, with a command to communicate it to us, and to enjoin it upon our acceptance and submission, as the rule of our opinions and manners.

He may believe that a divine communication has been made to himself; but his belief has no authority to command ours. He may have actually received it; but we have not the means of knowing it without proof.

That proof is not the high and excellent nature of the truths he teaches: in other words, that which is called the internal evidence cannot be that proof. For we cannot tell whether the doctrines he teaches, though they should be capable of a higher degree of rational demonstration than any delivered to the world before, may not be the fruits of his own mental labor. He may be conscious that they are not; but we have no means of knowing that of which he is conscious, except by his own testimony. To us

therefore they would have no authority but as the opinions of a man, whose intellectual attainments we might admire, but to whom we could not submit as to an infallible guide; and the less so, if any part of the doctrine taught by him were either mysterious and above our reason, or contrary to our interests, prejudices, and passions.

If therefore any person should profess to have received a revelation of truth from God to teach to mankind, and that he was directed to command their

obedience to it on pain of the Divine displeasure, he would be asked for some external authentication of his mission; nor would the reasonableness and excellence of his doctrines be accepted in place of this. The latter might entitle him to attention; but nothing short of the former would be thought a ground sufficiently strong for yielding to him an absolute obedience. Without it he might reason, and be heard with respect; but he could not command. On this very reasonable ground, the Jews, on one occasion,

asked our Lord, by what authority doest thou these things?" and on another, "What, sign showest thou unto us?"

Agreeably to this, the authors both of the Jewish and the Christian revelations profess to have authenticated their mission by the two great external proofs, Miracles and Prophecy; and it remains to be considered whether this kind of authentication be reasonably sufficient to command our faith and obedience.

The question is not, whether we may not conceive of external proofs of the mission of Moses, and of Christ and his apostles, differing from those which are assumed to have been given, and more convincing. In whatever way the authentication had been made, we might have conceived of modes of proof differing in kind or more ample in circumstance; so that to ground an objection upon the absence of a particular kind of proof for which we have a preference, would be trifling. (6) But this is

the question, is a mission to teach the will of God to man, under his immediate authority, sufficiently authenticated when miracles are really performed, and prophecies actually and unequivocally accomplished? To this point only the inquiry need now go; for whether real miracles were performed by Moses and Christ, and whether prophecies were actually uttered by them, and received unequivocal accomplishment, will be reserved for a farther stage of the inquiry.

(6) "We know not beforehand what degree or kind of natural information it were to be expected God would afford men, each by his own reason and experience, nor how far he would enable and effectually dispose them to communicate it, whatever it should be, to each other; nor whether the evidence of it would be certain, highly probable, or doubtful; nor whether it would be given with equal clearness and conviction to all, Nor could we guess, upon any good ground I mean, whether natural

knowledge, or even the faculty itself, by which we are capable of attaining it, reason, would be given us at once, or gradually. In like manner we are wholly ignorant what degree of new knowledge, it were to be expected, God would give mankind, by revelation, upon supposition of his affording one; or how far, or in what way, he would interpose miraculously to qualify them, to whom he should originally make the revelation, for communicating the knowledge given by it, and

to secure their doing it to the age in which they should live, and to secure its being transmitted to posterity. We are equally ignorant whether the evidence of it would be certain, or highly probable, or doubtful or whether all who should have any degree of instruction from it, and any degree of evidence of its truth, would have the same; or whether the scheme would be revealed at once, or unfolded gradually. Nay, we are not, in any sort, able to judge whether it were to have been expected, that

the revelation should have been committed to writing, or left to be handed down, and consequently corrupted, by verbal tradition, and, at length, sunk under it, if mankind so pleased, and during such time as they are permitted, in the degree they evidently are, to act as they will.

"Now, since it has been shown that we have no principles of reason upon which to judge beforehand, how it were to be expected revelation should have been left, or what was most suitable to the Divine "plan

of government in any of the aforementioned respects; it must be quite frivolous to object afterward as to any of them, against its being left one way rather than another; for this would be to object against things, upon account of their being different from our expectations, which has been shown to be without reason. And thus we see that the only question concerning the truth of Christianity is, whether it be a real revelation; not whether it he attended with every circumstance which we should have looked for;

and concerning the authority of Scripture, whether it be what it claims to be; not whether it be a book of such sort, and so promulgate as weak men are apt to fancy a book containing a Divine revelation should be. And, therefore, neither obscurity, nor seeming inaccuracy of style, nor various readings, nor early disputes about the authors of particular parts, nor any other things of the like kind, though they had been much more considerable in degree than they are, could overthrow the authority of

the Scripture, unless the prophets, apostles, or our Lord, had promised, that the book, containing the Divine revelation, should he secure from those things." (Butler's Analogy,) There is a popular, a philosophic, and a theological sense of the term miracle.

A miracle, in the popular sense, is a prodigy, or an extraordinary event, which surprises us by its novelty. In a more accurate and philosophic sense, a miracle is an effect which does not follow from any of

the regular laws of nature, or which is inconsistent with some known law of it, or contrary to the settled constitution and course of things. Accordingly, all miracles presuppose an established system of nature, within the limits of which they operate, and with the order of which they disagree.

Of a miracle in the theological sense, many definitions have been given, (7) That of Dr. Samuel Clarke is, - "A miracle is a work effected in a manner unusual, or

different from the common and regular method of providence, by the interposition of God himself, or of some intelligent agent superior to man, for the proof or evidence of some particular doctrine, or in attestation of the authority of some particular person."

(7) The reader may see several of them enumerated and examined in Doddridge's Lectures, part 5.

Mr. Horne defines a miracle to be "an effect or event contrary to the

established constitution or course of things, or a sensible suspension or controlment of, or deviation from, the known laws of nature, wrought either by the immediate act, or by the assistance, or by the permission of God." (Introduction to the Critical Study of the Scriptures, vol. 1, c. 4, sec. 2.) This definition would be more complete in the theological sense, if the last clause in Dr. S. Clarke's definition were added to it," for the proof or evidence of some particular doctrine, or in attestation

of the authority of some particular person." With this addition the definition will be sufficiently satisfactory, as it explains the nature of the phenomenon, and gives the reason or end of its occurrence.

Farmer, in his "Dissertation on Miracles," denies to any created intelligences, however high, the power of working miracles, when acting from themselves alone. This dispute is only to be settled by a strict definition of terms; but whatever power

may be allowed to Superior beings to produce miraculous effects, or effects apparently so, by the control they may be supposed to exert over natural objects; yet, as they are all under the government of God, they have certainly no power to interfere with his work, and the order of his providence, at pleasure. Whatever they do, therefore, whether by virtue of natural power, or power specially communicated, they must do it by commission, or at least by license.

The miracles under consideration are such effects as agree with the definition just given, and which are wrought either immediately by God himself, to attest the Divine mission of particular persons, and to authenticate their doctrines; or by superior beings commissioned by him for the same purpose; or by the persons themselves who profess this Divine authority, in order to prove that they have been invested with it by God.

The possibility of miracles wrought by the power of God can be denied by none but Atheists, or those whose system is substantially Atheistic. Spinosa denies that any power can supersede that of nature; or that anything can disturb or interrupt the order of things: and accordingly he defines a miracle to be "a rare event happening in consequence of some laws that are unknown to us." This is a definition of a prodigy, not of a miracle; but if miracles in the proper sense be allowed, that is, if the facts

themselves which have been commonly called miraculous be not disputed, this method of accounting for them is obviously most absurd; inasmuch as it is supposed that these unknown laws chanced to come into operation, just when men professing to be endued with miraculous powers wished them, while yet such laws were to them unknown. For instance, when Moses contended with the Egyptian magicians, though these laws were unknown to him, he ventured to depend

upon their operation, and by chance they served his purpose.

To one who believes in a Supreme Creator of all things, and the dependence of all things upon his power and will, miraculous interpositions must be allowed possible, nor is there anything in them repugnant to our ideas of his wisdom and immutability, and the perfection of his works.

They are departures from the ordinary course of God's operation; but this does not arise from any

natural necessity, to remedy an unforeseen evil, or to repair imperfections in his work; the reasons for them are moral and not natural reasons, and the ends they are intended to accomplish are moral ends. They remind us, when they occur, that there is a power superior to nature, and that all nature, even to its first and most uniform laws, depends upon Him, They are among the chief means by which he who is by nature invisible, makes himself as it were visible to his creatures, who are so prone to forget him

entirely, or to lose sight of him by reason of the interposition of the veil of material objects. (8)

Granting then the possibility of miraculous interposition on the part of the great Author of nature, on special occasions, and for great ends, in what way and under what circumstances does such an interposition authenticate the Divine mission of those who profess to be sent by him to teach his will to mankind?

(8) Bishop Butler has satisfactorily shown, in his

Analogy, (part ii, c. 1, 1,) that there can be no such presumption against miracles as to render them, in any wise, incredible, but what would conclude against such uncommon appearances as comets, and against there being any such powers in nature as magnetism and electricity, so contrary to the properties of other bodies not endued with these powers. But he observes, "Take in the consideration of religion, or the moral system of the world, and then we see distinct, particular reasons for

miracles, to afford mankind instruction, additional to that of nature, and to attest the truth of it; and our being able to discern reasons for them, gives a positive credibility to the history of them, in cases where those reasons hold,"

"It is impossible," says an oracle among modern unbelievers, (Voltaire,) "that a Being, infinitely wise, should make laws in order to violate them. He would not derange the machine of his own construction, unless it were

for its improvement. But as a God, he hath, without doubt, made it as perfect as possible; or, if he had foreseen any imperfection likely to result from it, he would surety have provided against it from the beginning, and not be under a necessity of changing it afterward. He is both unchangeable and omnipotent, and therefore can neither have any desire to alter the course of nature, nor have any need to do so."

"This argument," says Dr. Van Mildert, "is grounded

on a misconception or a misrepresentation of the design of miracles, which is not the remedy of any physical defect, not to rectify any original or accidental imperfections in the laws of nature, but to manifest to the world the interposition of the Almighty, for especial purposes of a moral kind. It is simply to make known to mankind, that it is he who addresses them, and that whatever is accompanied with this species of evidence, comes from him, and claims their implicit belief and obedience. The

perfection, therefore, or imperfection, of the laws of nature has nothing to do with the question. All nature is subservient to the will of God; and as his existence and attributes are manifest in the ordinary course of nature, so, in the extraordinary work of miracles, his will is manifested by the display of his absolute sovereignty over the course of nature. Thus, in both instances, the Creator is glorified in his works; and it, is made to appear, that by him all things consist, and that for his pleasure they are, and

were created. This seems a sufficient answer to any reasoning, a priori, against miracles, from their supposed inconsistency with the Divine perfections."

The argument is, that as the known and established course of nature has been fixed by him who is the Creator and Preserver of all things, it can never be violated, departed from, or controlled, but either immediately by himself, or immediately by other beings at his command, and by his assistance or

permission; for if this be not allowed, we must deny either the Divine omnipotence, or his natural government; and, if these be allowed, the other follows. Every real miracle is a work of God, done specially by him, by his permission, or with his concurrence.

In order to distinguish a real miracle, it is necessary that the common course of nature should be understood; for without some antecedent knowledge of the operation of physical causes, an event

might be deemed miraculous which was merely strange, and through our ignorance inexplicable.

Should an earthquake happen in a country never before visited by such a calamity within the memory of man, by the ignorant it might be considered miraculous; whereas an earthquake is a regular effect of the present established laws of nature?

But as the course of nature and the operation of physical causes are but partially understood, and

will perhaps never be fully comprehended by the most inquiring minds, it seems necessary that such miracles as are intended to authenticate any religious system, promulgate for the common benefit of mankind, should be effects produced upon objects whose properties have been the subject of common and long observation; that it should be contrary to some known laws by which the objects in question have been uniformly and long observed to be governed; or that the proximate cause

of the effect should be known to have no adequate power or adaptation to produce it. When these circumstances occur separately, and more especially when combined, a sufficient antecedent acquaintance with the course of nature exists to warrant the conclusion, that the effect is miraculous, or, in other words, that it is produced by the special interposition of God.

Whether the works ascribed to Moses and to Christ, and recorded in

Scripture were actually performed by them, will be considered in another place; but here it is proper to observe, that, assuming their actual occurrence, they are of such a nature as to leave no reasonable doubt of their miraculous character; and from them we may borrow a few instances for the sake of illustrating the preceding observations, without prejudging the argument.

The rod cast from the hand of Moses becomes a serpent. Here the subject was well known; it was a

rod, a branch separated from a tree, and it was obviously contrary to the known and established course of nature, that it should undergo so signal a transformation. If the fact can be proved, the miracle must therefore follow.

The sea is parted at the stretching out of the rod of Moses. Here is no adaptation of the proximate cause to produce the effect, which was obviously in opposition to the known qualities of water, A recession of the sea from the shores would

have taken down the whole mass of water from the head of the gulf; but here the waters divide, and, contrary to their nature, stand up on each side, leaving a passage for the host of Israel.

It is in the nature of clouds to be carried about by the wind; but the cloud which went before the Israelites in the wilderness, rested on their tabernacle, moved when they were commanded to march, and directed their course; rested when they were to pitch their tents, and was a

pillar of direction by day; and, by night, when it is the nature of clouds to become dark, the rays of the sun no longer permeating them, this cloud shone with the brightness of fire.

In all these cases, if the facts be established, there can be no doubt as to their miraculous character.

"Were a physician instantly to give sight to a blind man, by anointing his eyes with a chemical preparation, to the nature and qualities of which we were absolute strangers, the cure would to us,

undoubtedly, be wonderful; but we could not pronounce it miraculous, because it might be the physical effect of the operation of the unguent upon the eye. But were he to give sight to his patient, merely by commanding him to receive it, or by anointing his eyes with spittle, we should, with the utmost confidence, pronounce the cure to be a miracle; because we know perfectly, that neither the human voice nor human spittle has, by the established constitution of things, any

such power over the diseases of the eye. No one is ignorant, that persons, apparently dead, are often restored to their families and friends, by being treated, during suspended animation, in the manner recommended by the Humane Society. To the vulgar, and sometimes even to men of science these resuscitations appear very wonderful; but as they are known to be effected by physical agency, they cannot be considered as miraculous deviations from the laws of nature. On the other hand, no one could

doubt of his having witnessed a real miracle, who had seen a person, that had been four days dead, come alive out of the grave at the call of another, or who had even beheld a person exhibiting all the common evidences of death, instantly resuscitated, merely by being desired to live." (Gleig's edition of Stackhouse's History of the Bible, vol. iii, p. 241.)

In all such instances, the common course of nature is sufficiently known to support the conclusion,

that the power which thus interferes with, and controls it, and produces effects to which the visible, natural causes are known not to be adequate, is God. (9) (9) It is observable, that no miracles appear to have been wrought by human agency before the time of Moses and Aaron, in whose days, not only had the world long existed, but consequently the course of nature had been observed for a long period: and farther, these first miracles were wrought among a refined and observant people, who had their

philosophers, to whom the course of nature, and the operation of physical causes, were subjects of keen investigation.

But it is also necessary, in order to prove that even these miraculous events are authentications of a Divine mission, that a direct connection between the power of God, exerted in a miraculous act, and the messenger, and his message, should be established.

The following circumstances would appear sufficiently to

establish such a connection:- 1. When the miracles occur at the time when he, who professes to have a Divine mission from God, is engaged in making known the will of God to mankind, by communicating the revelation he has received, and performing other acts connected with his office. 2. When, though they are works above human power, they are wrought by the messenger himself, or follow his volitions. The force of this argument may be thus exhibited:-

When such unequivocal miracles as those we have pointed out occur only in connection with an actual profession by certain persons, that they have a Divine authority to teach and command mankind, this is a strong presumption, that the works are wrought by God in order to authenticate this pretension; but when they are performed immediately by these persons themselves, by their own will, and for the express purpose of establishing their mission, inasmuch as they are

allowed to be real miracles, which no power, but that of God, can effect, it is then clear that God is with them, and that his co-operation is an authenticating and visible seal upon their commission.

It is not necessary, in this stage, to specify the rules by which real and pretended miracles are to be distinguished; nor to inquire, whether the Scriptures allow, that, in some cases, miracles have been wrought in support of falsehood. Both these subjects will be examined

when we come to speak of the miracles of Scripture, The ground established is, that miracles are possible; and that, when real miracles occur under the circumstances we have mentioned, they are satisfactory evidences of a Divine mission.

But though this should be allowed, and also that the eye witnesses of such miracles would be bound to admit the proof, it has been made a question, whether their testimony affords sufficient reason to others to admit the fact that such

events actually took place, and Consequently whether we are bound to acknowledge the authority of that mission, in attestation of which the miracles are said to have been wrought.

If this be admitted, the benefits of a revelation must be confined to those who witnessed its attestation by miracle, or similar attestations must be afforded to every individual; for, as no revelation can be a benefit unless it possess Divine authority, which alone can

infallibly mark the distinction between truth and error, should the authentication be partial, the benefit of the communication of an infallible doctrine must also be partial. We are all so much interested in this, because no religious system can plead the authentication of perpetual miracle, that it deserves special consideration. Either this principle is unsound, or we must abandon all hope of discovering a religion of Divine authority.

As miracles are facts, they, like other facts, may be reported to others; and, as in the case of the miracles in question, bearing the characters which have been described, the competency of any man of ordinary understanding to determine whether they were actually wrought cannot be doubted; if the witnesses are credible, it is reasonable that their testimony should be admitted: for if the testimony be such as, in matters of the greatest moment to us in the affairs of common life, we should

not hesitate to act upon; if it be such, that, in the most import ant affairs, men do uniformly act upon similar or even weaker testimony; it would be mere perverseness to reject it in the case in question; and would argue rather a disinclination to the doctrine which is thus proved, than any rational doubt of the sufficiency of the proof itself.

The objection is put in its strongest form by Mr. Hume, in his Essays, and the substance of it is,

- Experience is the ground of the credit we give to human testimony; but this experience is by no means constant, for we often find men prevaricate and deceive. On the other hand, it is experience, in like manner, which assures us of those laws of nature, in the violation of which the notion of a miracle consists; but this experience is constant and uniform. A miracle is an event which, from its nature, is inconsistent with our experience; but the falsehood of testimony is not inconsistent with

experience: it is contrary to experience that miracles should be true, but not contrary to experience that testimony should be false; and, therefore, no human testimony can, in any case, render them credible.

This argument has been met at large by many authors, (1) but the following extracts afford ample refutation:-

"The principle of this objection is that it is contrary to experience that a miracle should be true; but not contrary to

experience that testimony should be false.

"Now there appears a small ambiguity in the term 'experience,' and in the phrases 'contrary to experience,' or 'contradicting experience,' which it may be necessary to remove in the first place.

Strictly speaking, the narrative of a fact is then only contrary to experience, when the fact is related to have existed at a time and place; at which time and place, we, being present, did not perceive it to exist; as if it should be

asserted that, in a particular room, and at a particular hour of a certain day, a man was raised from the dead; in which room, and at the time specified, we being present and looking on, perceived no such event to have taken place.

(1) See Campbell's Dissertation on Miracles; Price's Four Dissertations, Diss. 4; Paley's Evidences; Adam's Essay on Miracles; Bishop Douglass's Criterion; Dwight's Theology, vol.ii; Dr. Hey's Norrisian Lectures, vol.i,

Van Mildert's Boyle's Lectures, vol. i.

"Here the assertion is contrary to experience, properly so called; and this is a contrariety which no evidence can surmount. It matters nothing whether the fact be of a miraculous nature or not.

But although this be the experience and the contrariety, which Archbishop Tillotson alleged in the quotation with which Mr. Hume opens his Essay, it is certainly not that experience, nor that

contrariety, which Mr. Hume himself intended to object. And, short of this, I know no intelligible signification which can be affixed to the term 'contrary to experience,' but one, viz., that of not having ourselves experienced anything similar to the thing related, or such things not being generally experienced, by others. I say, 'not generally;' for to state, concerning the fact in question, that no such thing was ever experienced, or that universal experience is against it, is

to assume the subject of the controversy.

"Now the improbability which arises from the want (for this properly is a want, not a contradiction,) of experience, is only equal to the probability there is, that if the thing were true, we should experience things similar to it, or that such things would be generally experienced.

Suppose it then to be true, that miracles were wrought upon the first promulgation of Christianity, when nothing but miracles could decide

its authority, is it certain that such miracles would be repeated so often, and in so many places, as to become objects of general experience?

Is it a probability approaching to certainty? Is it a probability of any great strength or force? Is it such as no evidence can encounter? And yet this probability is the exact converse, and therefore the exact measure of the improbability which arises from the want of experience, and which Mr.

Hume represents as invincible by human testimony.

"It is not like alleging a new law of nature, or a new experiment in natural philosophy; because, when these are related, it is expected that, under the same circumstances, the same effect will follow universally; and in proportion as this expectation is justly entertained, the want of a corresponding experience negatives the history. But to expect concerning a miracle, that it should

succeed upon a repetition, is to expect that which would make it cease to be a miracle, which is contrary to its nature as such, and would totally destroy the use and purpose for which it was wrought.

"The force of experience, as an objection to miracles, is founded in the presumption, either that the course of nature is invariable, or that, if it be ever varied, variations will be frequent and general. Has the necessity of this alternative been demonstrated? Permit us

to call the course of nature the agency of an intelligent Being; and is there any good reason for judging this state of the case to be probable? Ought we not rather to expect, that such a Being, on occasions of peculiar importance, may interrupt the order which he had appointed, yet, that such occasions should return seldom; that these interruptions, consequently, should be confined to the experience of a few; that the want of it, therefore, in many, should be matter neither of surprise, nor objection?

"But as a continuation of the argument from experience, it is said, that when we advance accounts of miracles, we assign effects without causes, or we attribute effects to causes inadequate to the purpose, or to causes, of the operation of which we have no experience. Of what causes, we may ask, and of what effects does the objection speak?" If it be answered, that when we ascribe the cure of the palsy to a touch, of blindness to the anointing of the eyes with clay, or the raising of the dead to a

word, we lay ourselves open to this imputation; we reply, that we ascribe no such effects to such causes. We perceive no virtue or energy in these things more than in other things of the same kind. They are merely signs, to connect the miracle with its end.

The effect we ascribe simply to the volition of the Deity; of whose existence and power, not to say of whose presence and agency, we have previous and independent proof. We have, therefore, all we seek for in the works of rational

agents-a sufficient power, and an adequate motive. In a word, once believe that there is a God, and miracles are not incredible!

"Mr. Hume states the case of miracles to be, a contest of opposite improbabilities; that is to say, a question whether it be more improbable that the miracle should be true, or the testimony false; and this I think a fair account of the controversy. But herein I remark a want of argumentative justice, that, in describing the improbability of miracles,

he suppresses all those circumstances of extenuation which result from our knowledge of the existence, power, and disposition of the Deity; his concern in the creation; the end answered by the miracle; the importance of that end, and its subservience to the plan pursued in the works of nature. As Mr. Hume has represented the question, miracles are alike incredible to him who is previously assured of the constant agency of a Divine Being, and to him who believes that no such Being

exists in the universe. They are equally incredible, whether related to have been wrought upon occasions the most deserving, and for purposes the most beneficial, or for no assignable end whatever, or for an end confessedly trifling or pernicious. This surely cannot be a correct statement. In adjusting also the other side of the balance, the strength and weight of testimony, this author has provided an answer to every possible accumulation of historical proof, by telling us that we

are not obliged to explain how the story or the evidence arose. Now I think that we are obliged; not, perhaps, to show by positive accounts how it did, but by a probable hypothesis how it might so happen. The existence of the testimony is a phenomenon; the truth of the fact solves the phenomenon. If we reject this solution, we ought to have some other to rest in; and none, even by our adversaries, can be admitted, which is not consistent with the principles that regulate

human affairs and human conduct at present, or which makes men then to have been a different kind of beings from what they are now,

"But the short consideration which, independently of every other, convinces me that there is no solid foundation for Mr. Hume's conclusion, is the following:- When a theorem is proposed to a mathematician, the first thing he does with it is to try it upon a simple case; and if it produce a false result, he is sure that there

is some mistake in the demonstration. Now, to proceed in this way with what may be called Mr. Hume's theorem, - If twelve men, whose probity and good sense I had long known, should seriously and circumstantially relate to me an account of a miracle wrought before their eyes, and in which it was impossible that they should be deceived: if the governor of the country, hearing a rumor of this account, should call these men into his presence, and offer them a short proposal, either to confess

the imposture, or submit to be tied up to a gibbet; if they should refuse with one voice to acknowledge that there existed any falsehood or imposture in the case; if this threat were communicated to them separately, yet with no different effect; if it was at last executed; if I myself saw them, one after another, consenting to be racked, burned, or strangled, rather than give up the truth of their account; still, if Mr. Hume's rule be my guide, I am not to believe them. Now I undertake to say,

that there exists not a skeptic in the world who would not believe them, or who would defend such incredulity." - (Paley's Evidences, Preparatory Considerations.)

"The essayist," says the bishop of Llandaff, "who has most elaborately drawn out this argument, perplexes the subject, by attempting to adjust, in a sort of metaphysical balance of his own invention, the degrees of probability resulting from what he is pleased to call opposite experiences; viz.

the experience of men's veracity, on the one hand, and the experience of the firm and unalterable constitution of the laws of nature, on the other. But the fallacy in this mode of reasoning is obvious. For, in the first place, miracles can, at most, only be contrary to the experience of those who never saw them performed: to say, therefore, that they are contrary to general experience, (including, as it should seem, the experience even of those who profess to have seen and to have examined

them,) is to assume the very point in question. And, in the next place, it is equally fallacious to allege against them the experience of the unalterable constitution of the laws of nature; because, unless the fact be previously investigated, whether those laws have ever been altered or suspended, this is likewise a gratuitous assumption.

"In truth this boasted balance of probabilities could only be employed with effect, in the cause of infidelity, by

counterpoising, against the testimony of those who professed to have seen miracles, the testimony of those (if any such were to be found) who, under the circumstances, and with the same opportunities of forming a judgment, professed to have been convinced, that the things which they saw were NOT miracles, but mere impostures and delusions. Here would be indeed experience against experience: and a skeptic might be well employed in estimating the comparative weight of the testimony on

either side; in order to judge of the credibility or incredibility of the things proposed to his belief. But when he weighs only the experience of those, to whom the opportunity of judging of a miracle by personal observation has never been afforded, against the experience of those who declare themselves to be eye witnesses of the fact; instead of opposite experiences, properly so called, he is only balancing total inexperience on the one hand, against positive experience on the other.

"Nor will it avail anything to say, that this particular inexperience of those who have never seen miracles, is compensated by their general experience of the unalterable course of nature. For, as we have already observed, this is altogether a mere petitio principii. It is arguing, upon a supposition wholly incapable of proof, that the course of nature is indeed so unalterably fixed, that even God himself, by whom its laws were ordained, cannot, when he sees fit, suspend their operation.

"There is therefore a palpable fallacy, (however a subtle metaphysician may attempt to disguise it by ingenious sophistry,) in representing the experience of mankind as being opposite to the testimony on which our belief of miracles is founded. For, the opposite experiences, as they are called, are not contradictory to each other; since ' there is' (as has been justly observed) no inconsistency in believing them both.' A miracle necessarily supposes an established

and generally unaltered (though not unalterable) course of things; for, in its interception of such a course lies the very essence of a miracle, as here understood. Our experience, therefore, of the course of nature leads us to expect its continuance, and to act accordingly; but it does not set aside any proofs, from valid testimony, of a deviation from it: neither can our being personally unacquainted with a matter of fact, which took place a thousand years ago, or in a distant part of the world,

warrant us in disbelieving the testimony of personal witnesses of the fact. Common sense revolts at the absurdity of considering one man's ignorance or inexperience as a counterpoise to another man's knowledge and experience of a matter of fact. Yet on no better foundation does this favorite argument of infidels appear to rest."

The substance of Dr. Campbell's answer to Mr. Hume's argument has been thus given:-

"The evidence arising from human testimony is not solely derived from experience: on the contrary, testimony has a natural influence on belief, antecedent to experience, The early and unlimited assent given to testimony by children, gradually contracts as they advance in life; it is therefore more consonant to truth to say, that our diffidence in testimony is the result of experience, than that our faith in it has this foundation. Beside, the uniformity of experience in favor of any fact is not a

proof against its being reversed in a particular instance. The evidence arising from the single testimony of a man of known veracity, will go farther to establish a belief of its being actually reversed. If his testimony be confirmed by a few others of the same character, we cannot withhold our assent to the truth, of it. Now, though the operations of nature are governed by uniform laws, and though we have not the testimony of our senses in favor of any violation of them; still, if in

particular instances we have the testimony of thousands of our fellow creatures, and those, too, men of strict integrity, swayed by no motives of ambition or interest, and governed by the principles of common sense, that they were actually witnesses of these violations, the constitution of our nature obliges us to believe them.

"Mr. Hume's reasoning is founded upon too limited a view of the laws and course of nature. If we consider things duly, we shall find that lifeless matter is

utterly incapable of obeying any laws, or of being endued with any powers; and, therefore, what is usually called the course of nature, can be nothing else than the arbitrary will and pleasure of God, acting Continually upon matter according to certain rules of uniformity, still bearing a relation to contingencies. So that it is as easy for the Supreme Being to alter what men think the course of nature, as to preserve it.

Those effects, which are produced on the world

regularly and indesinently, and which are usually termed the works of nature, prove the constant providence of the Deity; those, on the contrary, which, upon any extraordinary occasion, are produced in such a manner as it is manifest could not have been either by human power, or by what is called chance, prove undeniably the immediate interposition of the Deity on that especial occasion. God, it must be recollected, is the Governor of the moral as well as of the physical world; and since

the moral well-being of the universe is of more consequence than its physical order and regularity, it follows obviously, that the laws, conformably with which the material world seems generally to be regulated, are subservient and may occasionally yield to the laws by which the moral world is governed. Although, therefore, a miracle is contrary to the usual course of nature, (and would indeed lose its beneficial effect if it were not so,) it cannot thence be inferred, that it is 'a

violation of the laws of nature,' allowing the term to include a regard to moral tendencies. The laws by which a wise and holy God governs the world, cannot (unless he is pleased to reveal them) be learnt in any other way than from testimony; since, on this supposition, nothing but testimony can bring us acquainted with the whole series of his dispensations; and this kind of knowledge is absolutely necessary previously to our correctly inferring those laws. Testimony, therefore, must

be admitted as constituting the principal means of discovering the real laws by which the universe has been regulated; that testimony assures us, that the apparent course of nature has often been interrupted to produce important moral effects; and we must not at random disregard such testimony, because in estimating its credibility we ought to look almost infinitely more at the moral than at the physical circumstances connected With any particular event." (2) Such evidence as that of

miracles, transmitted to distant times by satisfactory testimony, a revelation may then receive. The fitness of this kind of evidence to render that revelation an instant and universal benefit, wherever it comes, is equally apparent; for, as Mr., Locke observes, (Reasonableness of Christianity,) "the bulk of mankind have not leisure nor capacity for demonstration, nor can they carry a train of proofs; but as to the Worker of miracles, all his commands become principles; there

needs no other proof of what he says, but that he said it, and there needs no more than to read the inspired books to be instructed."

(2) It would be singular, did we not know the inconsistencies of error, that Mr. Hume himself, as Dr. Campbell shows, gives up his own argument.

"I own," these are his words, "there may possibly be miracles, or violations of the usual course of nature, of such a kind as to admit a proof from human testimony, though perhaps

[in this he is modest enough, he avers nothing; perhaps] it will be impossible to find any such in all the records of history." To this declaration he subjoins the following supposition - "Suppose all authors, in all languages, agree that from the first of January, 1600, there was a total darkness over the whole earth for eight days; suppose that the tradition of this extraordinary event is still strong and lively among the people; that all travelers who return from foreign countries, bring us

accounts of the same traditions, Without the least variation or contradiction: it is evident that our present philosophers, instead of doubting of that fact, ought to receive it for certain, and ought to search for the causes whence it might be derived." Could one imagine that the person who had made the above acknowledgment, a person too who is justly allowed by all who are acquainted with his writings, to possess uncommon penetration and philosophical abilities, that this were the same

individual who had so short a while before affirmed, that "a miracle," or a violation of the course of nature, "supported by any human testimony, is more properly a subject of derision than of argument."

The objection "that successive testimony diminishes, and that so rapidly as to command no assent after a few centuries at most," deserves not so full a refutation, since it is evident, that "testimony continues credible so long as it is transmitted with all those circumstances and

conditions which first procured it a certain degree of merit among men. Who complains of a decay of evidence in relation to the actions of Alexander, Hannibal, Pompey, or Caesar? We never hear persons wishing they had lived ages earlier, that they might have had better proof that Cyrus was the conqueror of Babylon; that Darius was beaten in several battles by Alexander,"

&c. (See Dr, O. Gregory's Letters on the Christian Revelation, vol. i, p. 196.)

Having thus shown, that miracles are possible; that under certain circumstances their reality may be ascertained; that when accompanied by other circumstances which we have also mentioned, they are connected with a definite end, and connect themselves with the Divine mission of those who perform them, and with the truth of their doctrine; that as facts they are the subjects of human testimony, and that credible testimony respecting them lays a competent foundation for

our belief in them, and in those revelations which they are clearly designed to attest, - the way is prepared for the consideration of the miracles recorded in Scripture.

Prophecy is the other great branch of the external evidence of a revelation; and the nature and force of that kind of evidence may fitly be pointed out before either the miracles or prophecies of the Bible are examined: for by ascertaining the general principles on which this kind of evidence rests, the

consideration of particular cases will be rendered more easy and satisfactory.

No argument a priori against the possibility of prophecy can be attempted by anyone who believes in the existence and infinitely perfect nature of God.

The infidel author of "The Moral Philosopher," indeed, rather insinuates than attempts fully to establish a dilemma with which to perplex those who regard prophecy as one of the proofs of a Divine revelation. He thinks that either prophecy must

respect "events necessary, as depending upon necessary causes, which might be certainly fore known and predicted;" or that, if human actions are free, and effects contingent, the possibility of prophecy must be given up, as it implies foreknowledge, which, if granted, would render them necessary.

The first part of this objection would be allowed, were there no predictions to be adduced in favor of a professed revelation, except such as

related to events which human experience has taught to be dependent upon some cause, the existence and necessary operation of which are within the compass of human knowledge. But to foretell such events would not be to prophesy, any more than to say, that it will be light tomorrow at noon, or that on a certain day and hour next year there will occur an eclipse of the sun or moon, when that event has been previously ascertained by astronomical calculation.

If, however, it were allowed, that all events depended upon a chain of necessary causes, yet, in a variety of instances, the argument from prophecy would not be at all affected; for the foretelling of necessary results in certain circumstances is beyond human intelligence, because they can only be known to Him by whose power those necessary causes on which they depend have been arranged, and who has prescribed the times of their operation. To borrow a case, for the sake of

illustration, from the Scriptures, though the claims of their predictions are not now in question; let us allow that such a prophecy as that of Isaiah respecting the taking of Babylon by Cyrus was uttered, as it purports to be, more than a century before Cyrus was born, and that all the actions of Cyrus and his army, and those of the Babylonian monarch and his people, were necessitated; is it to be maintained that the chain of necessitating causes running through more than a century could be traced

by a human mind, so as to describe the precise manner in which that fatality would unfold itself, even to the turning of the river, the drunken carousal of the inhabitants, and the neglect of shutting the gates of the city? This, being by uniform and universal experience known to be above all human apprehension, would therefore prove that the prediction was made in consequence of a communication from a superior and Divine Intelligence. Were events therefore subjected to

invincible fate and necessity, there might nevertheless be prophecy.

The other branch of the dilemma is founded on the notion, that if we allow the moral freedom of human actions, prophecy is impossible, because certain foreknowledge is contrary to that freedom, and fixes and renders the event necessary.

To this the reply is, that the objection is founded on a false assumption, the Divine foreknowledge having no more influence in effectuating, or making

certain any event, than human foreknowledge in the degree in which it may exist; there being no moral causality at all in knowledge. This lies in the will, which is the determining, acting principle in every agent; or, as Dr. Samuel Clarke has expressed it in answer to another kind of objector, "God's infallible judgment concerning contingent truths does no more alter the nature of the things and cause them to be necessary, than our judging right at any time concerning a contingent

truth, makes it cease to be contingent; or than our science of a present truth is any cause of its being either true or present. Here, therefore, lies the fallacy of our author's argument. Because from God's fore knowing the existence of things depending upon a chain of necessary causes, it follows, that the existence of the things must needs be necessary; therefore from God's judging infallibly concerning things which depend not on necessary but free causes, he concludes that these things

also depend not upon free but necessary causes. Contrary, I say, to the supposition in the argument, for it must not be first supposed, that things are in their own nature necessary; but from the power of judging infallibly concerning free events, it must be proved that things, otherwise supposed free, will thereby unavoidably become necessary." The whole question lies in this, Is the simple knowledge of an action a necessitating cause of the action? And the answer must be in the

negative, as every man's consciousness will assure him. If the causality of influence, either immediate, or by the arrangement of compelling events, be mixed up with this, the ground is shifted; and it is no longer a question which respects simple prescience.

This metaphysical objection having no foundation in truth, the force of the evidence arising from predictions of events, distant, and out of the power of human sagacity to anticipate, and

uttered as authentications of a Divine commission, is apparent. "Such predictions, whether in the form of declaration, description, or representation of things future" as Mr. Boyle justly observes, "are supernatural things, and may properly be ranked among miracles." (Boyle's Christian Virtuoso.) For when, for instance, the events are distant many years or ages from the uttering of the prediction itself, depending on causes not so much as existing when the prophecy was

spoken and recorded, and likewise upon various circumstances and a long arbitrary series of things, and the fluctuating uncertainties of human volitions, and especially when they depend not at all upon any external circumstances, nor upon any created being, but arise merely from the counsels and appointment of God himself, - such events can be foreknown only by that Being, one of whose attributes is omniscience, and can be foretold by him only to whom the "Father of lights" shall reveal them:

so that whoever is manifestly endued with that predictive power, must, in that instance, speak and act by Divine inspiration, and what he pronounces of that kind must be received as the word of God, nothing more being necessary to assure us of this, than credible testimony that such predictions were uttered before the event, or conclusive evidence that the records which contain them are of the antiquity to which they pretend. (Vide Chapman's Eusebus, p. 158; Cudworth's Intellect.

Syst. p. 886; Vitringa in Isa. cap. 41.)

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10 THE EVIDENCES NECESSARY TO AUTHENTICATE A REVELATION - INTERNAL EVIDENCE - COLLATERAL EVIDENCE

The second kind of evidence, usually considered as necessary for the attestation of a Divine revelation, is called internal evidence.

This kind of evidence has been already described to be that which arises from the consideration of the doctrines taught, as being consistent with the character of God, and tending to promote the virtue and happiness of man, the ends for which a revelation of the will of God was needed, and for which it must have been given, if it be considered as an act of grace and mercy.

This subject, like the two branches of the external evidence, miracles and prophecy, involves

important general principles; and it may require to be the more carefully considered, as opinions have run into extremes. By some it has been doubted, whether what is called "the internal evidence," that is, the excellence of the doctrines and tendency of a revelation, ought to be ranked with the leading evidence of miracles and prophecy, seeing that the proof from miracles and from prophecy is decisive and absolute. For the same reason, however, prophecy might be excluded from the

rank of leading evidence, inasmuch as miracles of themselves are, in their evidence, decisive and absolute. If, however, it were contended, that proofs from miracles, prophecy, and internal evidence, are jointly necessary to constitute sufficient proof of the truth of a revelation, there would be reason to dispute the position, under standing by "sufficient evidence" that degree of proof which would render it highly unreasonable, perverse, and culpable, in any one to reject the authority of the

revelation. This evidence is afforded by miracles alone; for if there be any force at all in the argument from miracles, it goes to the full length of rational proof of a Divine attestation, and that both to him who personally witnesses the performance of a real miracle, and to whom it is credibly testified; and nothing more is absolutely necessary to enforce a rational conviction. But if it should please the Divine Author of a revelation to super add the farther evidence of prophecy, and also that of the obvious truth, and

beneficial tendency, of many parts of this revelation, circumstances which must necessarily be often apparent, it ought not to be disregarded in the argument in its favor, nor thought of trifling import; since though it may not be necessary to establish a rational and sufficient proof, it may have a secondary necessity, to arouse attention, to leave objectors more obviously without excuse, and also to accommodate the revelation to that variety which exists in the mental constitutions of men, one

mind being excited to attention, and disposed to conviction, more forcibly by one species of proof than by another.

In strict propriety, therefore, miracles may be considered as the primary evidence of the truth of a revelation, and every other species of proof as confirmatory. Prophecy and the internal evidence are leading evidences, but neither of them stand in the foremost place. The same abundance of proof we perceive in nature, for the demonstration of the

being and attributes of God. Proofs of the existence of a First Cause, almighty and infinitely wise, more than what is logically sufficient, surround us everywhere; but who can doubt, that if half the instances of infinite power and wisdom which are seen in the material universe were annihilated there would not be sufficient evidence to demonstrate both these, as perfections of the Maker of the universe?

On the other hand, the proof drawn from the

internal evidence by others has been placed first in order, and the force of the evidence from miracles and prophecy is by them made to depend upon the excellence of the doctrine which they are brought forward to confirm, and which ought first to be ascertained. Nothing, say they, is to be received as a revelation from God which does not contain doctrines worthy of the Divine character, and tending to promote the good of mankind. -

"A necessary mark of a religion coming from God is, that the duties it enjoins are all such as are agreeable to our natural notions of God, and perfective of the nature, and conducive to the happiness of man." (Dr. S. Clarke.)

Now, though it must be instantly granted, that in a revelation from God, there will be nothing contrary to his own character; and that, when it is made in the way of a merciful dispensation, it will contain nothing but what tends to

perfect the nature, and promote the happiness of his creatures; it is clear, that to try a professed revelation by our own notions, as to what is worthy of God and beneficial to mankind, is to assume, that, independent of a revelation, we know what God is, or we cannot say what is worthy or unworthy of him; and that we know, too, the character, and relations, and wants of man so perfectly as to determine what is beneficial to him; in other words, this supposes that we are in

circumstances not greatly to need supernatural instruction.

Another objection to the internal evidence being made the primary test of a revelation is, that it renders the external testimony nugatory, or comparatively unimportant. "Surely," observes a late ingenious writer, "in a system which purports to be a revelation from heaven, and to contain a history of God's dealings with men, and to develop truths with regard to the moral government of the universe, the

knowledge and belief of which will lead to happiness here and here after, we may expect to find (if its pretensions are well founded) an evidence for its truth, which shall be independent of all external testimony." (Erskine on the Internal Evidence, &c.) If this be true, the utility of the evidence of miracles is rendered very questionable. It is either unnecessary, or it is subordinate and dependent; neither of which, by Christian divines at least, can be consistently maintained. The non

necessity of miracles cannot be asserted by them, because they believe them to have been actually performed; and that they are subordinate proofs, and dependent upon the sufficiency of the internal evidence, is contradicted by the whole tenor of the Scriptures, which represent them as being in themselves an absolute demonstration of the mission and doctrine of the prophets, at whose instance they were performed, and never direct us to regard their doctrines as a test of the

miracles. The miracles of Christ, in particular, were a demonstration, not a partial and conditional, but a complete and absolute demonstration of his mission from God; and "it may be observed, with respect to all the miracles of the New Testament, that their divinity, considered in themselves, is always either expressly asserted, or manifestly implied: and they are accordingly urged as a decisive and absolute proof of the divinity of the doctrine and testimony of those who perform them, without ever taking into

consideration the nature of the doctrine, or of the testimony to be confirmed."

Against this mode of stating the internal evidence, there lies also this logical objection, that it is arguing in a circle;- the miracles are proved by the doctrine, and then the doctrine by the miracles; an objection from which those who have adopted the notion, either of the superior or the co-ordinate rank of the internal evidence, have not, with all

their ingenuity and effort, fairly escaped.

Miracles must, therefore, be considered as the leading and absolute evidence of a revelation from God; and "what to me," says a sensible writer, "is, a priori, a strong argument of their being so, is the manifest inconsistency of the other hypotheses with the very condition of that people for whose sake God should raise up at any time his extraordinary messengers, endued with such miraculous powers. For if

God ever favors mankind with such a special revelation of his will, and instructions from heaven, in a way supernatural, it is certainly in that unhappy juncture when the principles and practices of mankind are so miserably depraved and corrupted, as to want the light and assistance of revelation extremely, and are (humanly speaking) utterly incorrigible without it. Now, to say that, in these particular circumstances, men are not to depend on any real miracles, but, before they admit them as

evidence of the prophet's Divine mission, they must carefully examine his doctrine, to see if it be perfectly good and true, is either to suppose these people furnished with principles and knowledge requisite for that purpose, contrary, point blank, to the real truth of their case; or else it is to assert, that they who are utterly destitute of principles and knowledge requisite for that work, must, nevertheless, undertake it without them, and judge of the truth of the prophet's doctrine and authority by

their false principles of religion and morality; which, in short, is to fix them immovably where they are already, in old erroneous principles, against any new and true ones that should be offered. Especially with the bulk of mankind, full of darkness and prejudice, this must unavoidably be the consequence; and the more they wanted a reformation in principle, the less capable would they be of receiving it in this method. Thus, for instance: were a teacher sent from heaven, with signs and

wonders, to a nation of idolaters, and they previously instructed to regard no miracles of his whatsoever, till they were fully satisfied of the goodness of his doctrine, it is easy to foresee by what rule they would prove his doctrine, and what success he would meet with among them. Add to this, what is likewise exceedingly material, the great delays and perplexities attending this way of proceeding. For if every article of doctrine must be discussed and scanned by every person to whom it is offered, what

slow advances would be made by a Divine revelation among such a people! Hundreds would probably be cut off before they came to the end of their queries, and the prophet might grow decrepit with age, before he gained twenty proselytes in a nation." (CHAPMAN'S Eusebius.)

It is easy to discover the causes which have led to these mistakes, as to the true office of the internal evidence of a Divine revelation.

In the first place, a hypothetic case has been assumed, and it has been asked, "If a doctrine, absurd and wicked, should be attested by miracles, is it to be admitted as Divine, upon their authority?" The answer is, that this is a case which cannot in the nature of things occur, and cannot, therefore, be made the basis of an argument. We have seen already, that a real miracle can be wrought by none but God, or by his commission, because the contrary supposition would exclude him from the government

of the world which he has made and preserves, Whenever a real miracle takes place, therefore, in attestation of any doctrine, that doctrine cannot be either unreasonable or impious; and if it should appear so to us, after the reality of the miracle is ascertained, which is not probable ordinarily, our judgment must be erroneous. The miracle proves the doctrine, or the ground on which miracles are allowed to have any force of evidence at all, either supreme or sub-ordinate, absolute or

dependent, must be given up; for their evidence consists in this-that they are the works of God.

The second cause of the error has been, that the rational evidence of the truths contained in a revelation has been confounded with the authenticating evidence. When once an exhibition of the character, plans, and laws of God is made, though in their nature totally undiscoverable, by human faculties, they carry to the reason of man, so far as they are of a nature to be

comprehended by it, the demonstration which accompanies truth of any other kind. For as the eye is formed to receive light, the rational powers of man are formed to receive conviction when the congruity of propositions is made evident. This is rational, but it is not authenticating evidence. Let us suppose that there is no external testimony of miracles or prophecy vouchsafed to attest that the teacher, through whom we receive those doctrines which appear to us so sublime, so important, so

true, received them from God, with a mission to impart them to us. He himself has no means of knowing them to be from God, or of distinguishing them from some happy train of thought, into which his mind has been carried by its own force; nor if he had, have we any means of concluding that they are more than the opinions of a mind, superior in vigor and grasp to our own. They may be true, but they are not attested to be Divine. We have no guarantee of their infallible truth, because our own rational

powers are not infallible, nor those of the most gifted human mind. Add then the external testimony, and we have the attestation required. The rational evidence of the doctrine is the same in both cases; but the rational evidence, though to us it is as far, and only as far, as we can claim infallibility for our judgment, the proof of the truth of the doctrine is no proof at all that God has revealed it. In the external testimony alone that proof is found: the degree of rational evidence we have of the truth and excellency

of the doctrine may be a farther commendation of it to us, but it is no part of its authority.

From this distinction, the relative importance of the external and the internal evidence of a revelation may be farther illustrated. Rational evidence of the doctrines proposed to us, when it can be had, goes to establish their truth, so far as we can depend upon our judgment; but the external testimony, if satisfactory, establishes their Divine authority, and therefore their absolute truth, and

leaves us no appeal. Still farther, a revelation, dependent upon internal evidence only, could contain no doctrines, and enjoin no duties, but of which the evidence to our reason should be complete. The least objection grounded on a plausible contrary reason would weaken their force, and the absence of a clear perception of their congruity with some previous principles, admitted true, would be the absence of all evidence of their truth whatever. On the other hand, a

revelation, with rational proof of a Divine attestation, renders our instruction in many doctrines and duties possible, the rational evidence of whose truth is wanting; and as some doctrines may be true, and highly important to us, which are not capable of this kind of proof, that is, which are not so fully known as to be compared with any received propositions, and determined by them, our knowledge is, in this way, greatly enlarged: the benefits of revelation are

extended; and the whole becomes obligatory, and therefore efficient to moral purposes, because it bears upon it the seal of an infallible authority.

The firmer ground on which a revelation, founded upon reasonable external proof of authority, rests, is also obvious. The doctrines in which we need to be instructed are, the nature of God; our own relations to that invisible Being; his will concerning us; the means of obtaining or securing his favor; the principles of his

government; and a future life. These, and others of a similar kind, involve great difficulties, as the history of moral knowledge among mankind sufficiently proves; and that, not only among those who never had the benefits of the Biblical revelation on these subjects, but among those who, not considering it as an authority, have indulged the philosophizing spirit, and judged of these doctrines merely by their rational evidence. This, from the nature of things, appearing under different views to different minds,

has produced almost as much contrariety of opinion among them, as we find among the sages of pagan antiquity. The mere rational proof of the truth of such doctrines being therefore, from its nature, in, many important respects obscure, and liable to diversity of opinion, would lay but a very precarious and shifting foundation for faith in any revelation from God suited to remove the ignorance of man on points so important in doctrine, and so essential to an efficient religion and morality.

On the other hand, the process of obtaining a rational proof of the Divine attestation of a doctrine, by miracles for instance, is of the most simple and decisive kind, and gives to unbelief the character of obvious perverseness and inconsistency.

Perverseness, because there is a clear opposition of the will rather than of the judgment in the case; inconsistency, because a much lower degree of evidence is, by the very objectors, acted upon in their most important concerns in life. For who

that saw the dead raised to life, in an appeal to the Lord of life, in confirmation of a doctrine professing to be taught by his authority, but must, unless willful perverseness interposed, acknowledge a Divine testimony; and who that heard the fact reported on the testimony of honest men and competent observers, under circumstances in which no illusion can take place, but must be charged with inconsistency, should he treat the report with skepticism, when, upon the same kind and quantum of

evidence, he would so credit any report as to his own affairs, as to risk the greatest interests upon it? In difficult doctrines, of a kind to give rise to a variety of opinions, the rational evidence is accompanied with doubt; in such a case as that of the miracle we have supposed, it rests on principles supported by the universal and constant experience of mankind:- 1, That the raising of the dead is above human power:2. That men, unquestionably virtuous in every other respect, are not likely to propagate a deliberate

falsehood: and 3. That it contradicts all the known motives to action in human nature, that they should do so, not only without advantage, but at the hazard of reproach, persecution, and death. The evidence of such an attestation is therefore as indubitable as these principles themselves.

The fourth kind of evidence, by which a revelation from God may be confirmed, is the collateral; on which, at present, we need not say more than adduce some

instances, merely to illustrate this kind of testimony.

The collateral evidence of a revelation from God may be its agreement in principle with every former revelation, should previous revelations have been vouchsafed-that it was obviously suited to the circumstances of the world at the time of its communication-that it is adapted to effect the great moral ends which it purposes, and has actually effected them-that if it contain a record of facts, as

well as of doctrines, those historical facts agree with the credible traditions and histories of the same times-that monuments, either natural or instituted, remain to attest the truth of its history-that adversaries have made concessions in its favor-and that, should it profess to be a universal and ultimate revelation of the will and mercy of God to man, it maintains its adaptation to the case of the human race, and its efficiency, to the present day. These and many other circumstances may be

ranked under the head of collateral evidence, and some of them will, in their proper place, be applied to the Holy Scriptures.

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11 THE USE AND LIMITATION OF REASON IN RELIGION

Having pointed out the kind of evidence by which a revelation from God may be authenticated, and the circumstances under which it ought to produce conviction and enforce obedience, it appears to be

a natural order of proceeding to consider the subject of the title of this chapter, inasmuch as evidence of this kind, and for this end, must be addressed to our reason, the only faculty which is capable of receiving it, But as to this office of our reason important limitations and rules must be assigned, it will be requisite to adduce and explain them.

The present argument being supposed to be with one who believes in a God, the Lord and Governor of

man, and that he is a Being of infinite perfections, our observations will have the advantage of certain first principles which that belief concedes.

We have already adduced much presumptive evidence, that a revelation of the will of God is essential to his moral government, and that such a revelation has actually been made. We have also farther considered the kind and degree of evidence which is necessary to ratify it. The means by which a conviction of its truth is

produced, is the point before us.

The subject to be examined is the truth of a religious and moral system, professing to be from God, though communicated by men, who plead his authority for its promulgation. If there be any force in the preceding observations, we are not, in the first instance, to examine the doctrine, in order to determine from our own opinion of its excellence, whether it be from God, (for to this, if we need a revelation, we are

incompetent,) but we are to inquire into the credentials of the messengers, in quest of sufficient proof that God hath spoken to mankind by them, Should a slight consideration of the doctrine, either by its apparent excellence or the contrary, attract us strongly to this examination, it is well: but whatever prejudices, for or against the doctrine, a report, or a hasty opinion of its nature and tendency may inspire, our final judgment can only safely rest upon the proof which may be afforded of its

Divine authority. If that be satisfactory, the case is determined, whether the doctrine be pleasing or displeasing to us. If sufficient evidenced not afforded, we are at liberty to receive or reject the whole or any part of it as it may appear to us to be worthy of our regard; for it then stands on the same ground as any other merely human opinion. We are, however, to beware that this is done upon a very solemn responsibility.

The proof of the Divine authority of a system of

doctrine communicated under such circumstances, is addressed to our reason, or in other words it must be reasonable proof that in this revelation there has been a direct and special interposition of God.

On the principles therefore already laid down, that though the rational evidence of a doctrine lies in the doctrine itself, the rational proof of the Divine authority of a doctrine must be external to that doctrine; and that miracles and prophecy are appropriate and

satisfactory attestations of such an authority whenever they occur, the use of human reason in this inquiry is apparent. The alleged miracles themselves are to be, examined, to determine whether they are real or pretended, allowing them to have been performed; the testimony of witnesses is to be investigated, to determine whether they actually occurred; and if this testimony has been put on record, we have also to determine whether the record was at first faithfully made, and whether it has

been carefully and uncorruptedly preserved. With respect to prophecy we are also to examine, whether the professed prophecy be a real prediction of future events, or only an ambiguous and equivocal saying, capable of being understood in various ways; whether it relates to events which lie beyond the guess of wise and observing men; whether it was uttered so long before the events predicted, that they could not be anticipated in the usual order of things; whether it was publicly or

privately uttered; and whether, if put on record, that record has been faithfully kept. To these points must our consideration be directed, and to ascertain the strength of the proof is the important province of our reason or judgment. The second use of reason respects the interpretation of the revelation thus authenticated; and here the same rules are to be applied as in the interpretation of any other statement or record; for as our only object, after the authenticity of the

revelation is established, is to discover its sense, or in other words to ascertain what is declared unto us therein by God, our reason or judgment is called to precisely the same office as when the meaning of any other document is in question. The terms of the record are to be taken in their plain and commonly received sense;- figures of speech are to be interpreted with reference to the local peculiarities of the country in which the agents who wrote the record resided;- idioms are to be understood according

to the genius of the language employed;- if any allegorical or mystical discourses occur, the key to them must be sought in the book itself, and not in our own fancies;- what is obscure must be interpreted by that which is plain;- the scope and tenor of a discourse must be regarded, and no conclusion formed on passages detached from their context, except they are complete in their sense, or evidently intended as axioms and apophthegms. These and other rules, which respect the time and

place when the record was written; the circumstances of the writer and of those to whom he immediately addressed himself; local customs, &c, appear in this, and all other cases, so just and reasonable as to commend themselves to every sober man: and we rightly use our reason in the interpretation of a received revelation, when we conduct our inquiries into its meaning, by those plain common-sense rules which are adopted by all mankind when the meaning of other writings is to be ascertained.

It has been added, as a rule of interpretation, that when a revelation is sufficiently attested, and in consequence of that admitted, nothing is to be deduced from it which is contrary to reason. As this rule is liable to be greatly misunderstood, and has sometimes been pushed to injurious consequences, we shall consider it at some length; and point out the sense in which it may be safely admitted.

Some persons, who advocate this principle of interpretation, appear to

confound the reason of man, with the reason or nature of things, and the relations which subsist among them. These however can be known fully to God alone; and to use the term reason in this sense, is the same as to use it in the sense of the reason of God, - to an equality with which human reason cannot aspire. It may be the reverse of Divine reason, or a faint radiation from it, but never can it be full and perfect as the reason of a mind of perfect knowledge. It is admitted that nothing can be

revealed by God, as truth, contradictory of his knowledge, and of the nature of things themselves; but it follows not from this, that nothing should be contained in that revelation contradictory of the limited and often erring reason of man. (3) (3) "It is the error of those who contend that all necessary truth is discoverable or demonstrable by reason, that they affirm of human reason in particular, what is only true of reason in general, or of reason in the abstract. To say, that whatever is true, must be

either discoverable or demonstrable by reason, can only be affirmed of an all-perfect reason; and is therefore predicated of none but the Divine intellect. So that, unless it can be shown that human reason is the same, in degree, as well as in kind, with Divine reason; i. e. commensurate with it as to its powers, and equally incapable of error; the inference from reason in, the abstract, to human reason, is manifestly inconclusive. Nothing more is necessary to show the fallacy of this mode of

arguing, than to urge the indisputable truth, that God is wiser than man, and has endued man with only a portion of that faculty which he himself, and none other beside him, possesses in absolute perfection." (Van Mildert's Sermons at Boyle's Lecture.)

Another distinction necessary to be made in order to the right application of this rule is, that a doctrine which cannot be proved by our reason, is not on that account, contrary either to the nature of things, or

even to reason itself. This is sometimes lost sight of, and that which has no evidence from our reason is hastily presumed to be against it. Now rational investigation is a process by which we inquire into the truth or falsehood of anything by comparing it with what we intuitively, or by experience, know to be true, or with that which we have formerly demonstrated to be so. "By reason," says Cicero, "we are led from things apprehended and understood, to things not apprehended." Rational

proof therefore consists in the agreement or disagreement of that which is compared with truths already supposed to be established. But there may be truths, the evidence of which can only be fully known to the Divine mind, and on which the reasoning or comparing faculty of an inferior nature cannot, from their vastness or obscurity, be employed; and such truths there must be in any revelation which treats of the nature and perfections of God; his will as to us, - and the relations we stand in to him, and to

another state of being. As facts and doctrines, they are as much capable of revelation as if the whole reason of things on which they are grounded were put into the revelation also; but they may be revealed as authoritative declarations, of which the process of proof is hidden, either because it transcends our faculties, or for other reasons, and we have therefore no rational evidence of their truth farther than we have rational evidence that they come from God, which is in fact a more powerful

demonstration. That a revelation may contain truths of this transcendent nature must be allowed by all who have admitted its necessity, if they would be consistent with themselves; for its necessity rests, in great part, upon the weakness of human reason. If our natural faculties could have reached the truths thus exhibited to us, there had been no need of supernatural instruction; and if it has been vouchsafed, the degree depends upon the Divine will, and he may give a doctrine with its reasons,

or without them; for surely the ground of our obligation to believe his word does not rest upon our perception of the rational evidence of the truths he requires us to believe. If doctrines then be given without the reasons on which they rest, that is, without any apparent agreement with what is already known; because the process of proof must, in many cases, be a comparison of that which is too vast to be fully apprehended by us with something else which, because known by us, must

be comparatively little, or perhaps in some of its qualities or relations of a different nature, so that no fit comparison of things so dissimilar can be instituted; this circumstance proves the absence of rational evidence to us; but it by no means follows, that the doctrine is incapable of rational proof, though probably no reason but that of God, or of a more exalted being than man in his present state may be adequate to unfold it.

It has indeed been maintained, that though our reason may be inadequate to the discovery of such truths as the kind of revelation we have supposed to be necessary must contain, yet, when aided by this revelation, it is raised into so perfect a condition, that what appears incongruous to it ought to be concluded contrary to the revelation itself. This, to a certain extent, is true. When a doctrine is clearly revealed to us, standing as it does upon an infallible authority, no contrary

doctrine can be true, whether found without the record of the revelation, or deduced from it; for this is in fact no more than saying, that human opinions must be tried by Divine authority, and that revelation must be consistent with itself. The test to which in this case, however, we subject a contradictory doctrine, so long as we adhere to the revelation, is formed of principles which our reason did not furnish, but such as were communicated to us by supernatural interposition;

and the judge to which we refer is not, properly speaking, reason, but revelation.

But if by this is meant, that our reason, once enlightened by the annunciation of the great truths of revelation, can discover or complete, in all cases, the process of their rational proof, that is, their conformity to the nature and truth of things, and is thus authorized to reject whatever cannot be thus harmonized with our own deductions from the leading truths thus

revealed, so great a concession cannot be made to human ability. In many of the rules of morals, and the doctrines of religion too, it may be allowed, that a course of thought is opened which may be pursued to the enlargement of the rational evidence of the doctrines taught, but not as to what concerns many of the attributes of God; his purposes concerning the human race; some of his most important procedures toward us; and the future destiny of man. When once it is revealed that man is a

creature, we cannot but perceive the reasonable ness of our being governed by the law of our Creator; that this is founded in his right and our duty; and that, when we are concerned with a wise, and gracious, and just Governor, what is our duty must of necessity be promotive of our happiness. But if the revelation should contain any declarations as to the nature of the Creator himself, as that he is eternal and self existent and in every place; and that he knows all things; the

thoughts thus suggested, the doctrines thus stated, nakedly and authoritatively, are too mysterious to be distinctly apprehended by us, and we are unable, by comparing them with anything else, (for we know nothing with which we can compare them,) to acquire any clear views of the manner in which such a being exists, or why such perfections necessarily flow from his peculiar nature. If, therefore, the revelation itself does not state in addition to the mere facts that he is self-existent,

omnipresent, omniscient, &c, the manner in which the existence of such attributes harmonizes with the nature and reason of things, we cannot supply the chasm; and should we even catch some view of the rational evidence, which is not denied, we are unable to complete it; our reason is not enlightened up to the full measure of these truths, nor on such subjects are we quite certain that some of our most rational deductions are perfectly sound, and we cannot, therefore, make use of them as standards by

which to try any doctrine, beyond the degree in which they are clearly revealed, and authoritatively stated to us.

Other examples might be given, but these are sufficient for illustration.

These observations being made, it will be easy to assign definite limits to the rule, "that no doctrine in an admitted revelation is to be understood in a sense contrary to reason." The only way in which such a rule can be safely received is, that nothing is to be taken as a true

interpretation, when, as to the subject in question, we have sufficient knowledge to affirm, that the interpretation is contrary to the nature of things, which, in this case, it is also necessary to be assured that we have been able to ascertain. Of some things we know the nature without a revelation, inasmuch as they lie within the range of our own observation and experience, as that a human body cannot be in two places at the same time. Of other things we know the nature by

revelation, and by that our knowledge is enlarged. If, therefore, from some figurative passages of a revelation, any person, as the papists, should affirm, that wine is Human blood, or that a human body can be in two places at the same time, it is contrary to our reason, that is, not to mere opinion, but to the nature of something which we know so well, that we are bound to reject the interpretation as an absurdity. If, again, any were to interpret passages which speak of God as having the form of man to

mean, that he has merely a local presence, our reason has been taught by revelation, that God is a spirit, and exists everywhere, that is, so far we have been taught the nature of things as to God, that we reject the interpretation, as contrary to what has been so clearly revealed, and resolve every anthropomorphite expression we may find in the revelation into figurative and accommodated language. In the application of this rule, when even thus limited, care is, however, to

be taken, that we distinguish what is capable of being tried by it. If we compare one thing with another, in order to determine whether it agrees with, or differs from it, it is not enough that we have sufficient knowledge of that with which we compare it, and which we have made the standard of judgment. It is also necessary that the things compared should be of the same nature; and that the comparison should be made in the same aspects. We take for illustration the case just given. Of two

bodies we can affirm, that they cannot be in the same place at the same time; but we cannot affirm that of a body and a spirit, for we know what relation bodies have to place and to each other, but we do not know what relation spirits have to each other, or to space. This may illustrate the first rule. The second demands, that the comparison be made in the same respect. If we affirm of two bodies, one of a round, and the other of a square figure, that their figure is the same, the comparison determines the case, and at

once detects the error; but of these bodies, so different in figure, it may be affirmed without contradiction, that they are of the same specific gravity, for the difference of figure is not that in respect of which the comparison is made. We apply this to the interpretation of a revelation of God and his will. The rule which requires us to reject as a true interpretation of that revelation, whatever is contrary to reason, may be admitted in all cases where we know the real nature of things, and conduct the

comparison with the cautions just given; but it would be most delusive, and would counteract the intention of the revelation itself, by unsettling its authority, if it were applied in any other way. For,

1. In all cases where the nature of things is not clearly and satisfactorily known, it cannot be affirmed that a doctrine contradicts them, and is therefore contrary to reason.

2. When that of which we would form a rational judgment is not itself

distinctly apprehended, it cannot be satisfactorily compared with those things, the nature of which we adequately know, and therefore cannot be said to be contrary to reason.

Now in such a revelation as we have supposed necessary for man, there are many facts and doctrines which are not capable of being compared with anything we adequately know, and they therefore lie wholly without the range of the rule in question. We suppose it to declare what God, the

infinite First Cause, is. But it is of the nature of such a being to be, in many respects, peculiar to himself, and, as in those respects he cannot admit of comparison with any other, what may be false, if affirmed of ourselves, because contradictory to what we know of human nature, may be true of him, to whom the nature of things is his own nature, and his own nature alone. The same observation may be made as to many of his natural attributes; they are the attributes of a peculiar nature, and are therefore

peculiar to themselves, either in kind or in degree; they admit of no comparison, each being like HIMSELF, sui generis: and the nature of things, as to them respectively, is their own nature. The same reasoning may, in part, be applied to the general purposes of God, in making and governing his creatures. They are not, in every respect, capable of being compared to anything we adequately know, in order to determine their reasonableness.

Creatures do not stand to each other in all the relations in which they stand to him, and no reasoning from their mutual relations can assist us in judging of the plans he has formed with respect to the whole, with the extent of which, indeed, we are unacquainted, or often of a part, whose relations to the whole we know not. Were we to subject what he has commanded us to do, or to leave undone, to the test of reasonableness, we should often be at a loss how to commence the inquiry, for it may have a

reason arising out of his own nature, which we either know not at all, or only in the partial and authoritative revelations he has made of himself; or out of his general plans, of which we are not judges, for the reasons just given; or its reason may lie in our own nature, which we know but partially, because we find it differently operated upon by circumstances, and cannot know in what circumstances we may at any future time be placed.

With respect to the moral perfections of God, as they are more capable of a complete comparison with what we find in intelligent creatures, the notion of infinity being applicable to them in a different sense to that in which it is applied to his natural attributes, and adequate ideas of justice and mercy and goodness being within our reach, this rule is much more applicable in all cases which would involve interpretations consistent with or opposed to these ideas; and any deduction clearly contrary to them is

to be rejected, as grounded not upon the revelation but a false interpretation. This will be the more confirmed, if we find anything in the revelation itself in the form of an appeal to our own ideas of moral subjects, as for instance of justice and equity, in justification of the Divine proceedings; for then we have the authority of the Giver of the revelation himself for attaching such ideas to his justice and A equity as are implied in the same terms in the language of men. (4) A doctrine which would impugn these attributes, is

not therefore to be deduced from such a revelation; but here the rule can only be applied to such cases as we fully comprehend. There may be an apparent injustice in a case, which, if we knew the whole of it, would be found to harmonize with the strictest equity; and what evidence of conformity to the moral attributes of God it now wants may be manifested in a future state, either by superior information then vouchsafed to us, or, when the subject of the proceeding is an immortal

being, by the different circumstances of compensation in which he may be placed.

(4) Thus in the Scriptures we find numerous appeals of this kind: "Judge between me and my vineyard." "Are not my ways equal?" "Shall not the Judge of the whole earth do right?" All of which passages suppose that equity and justice in God accord with the ideas attached to the same terms among men.

Upon the whole then it will appear, that this rule of

interpreting a revelation is necessarily but of limited application, and chiefly respects those parts of the record in which obscure passages and figurative language may occur. In most others, a revelation, if comprehensive, will be found its own interpreter by bringing every doubtful case to be determined by its own unquestionable general principles, and explicit declarations. The USE of reason, therefore, in matters of revelation, is to investigate the evidences on which it is founded, and fairly and impartially to

interpret it according to the ordinary rules of interpretation in other cases. Its LIMIT is the authority of God. When he has explicitly laid down a doctrine, that doctrine is to be humbly received, whatever degree of rational evidence may be afforded of its truth, or withheld; and no torturing or perverting criticisms can be innocently resorted to, to bring a doctrine into a better accordance with our favorite views and systems, any more than to make a precept bend to the love and practice of our vicious

indulgences. A larger scope than this cannot certainly be assigned to human reason in matters of revelation, when it is elevated to the office of a, judge-a judge of the evidences on which a professed revelation rests, and a judge of its meaning after the application of the established rules of interpretation in other cases. (5) But if reason be considered as a learner, it may have a much wider range in those fields of intelligence which a genuine revelation from God will open to our view.

All truth, even that which to us is most abstruse and mysterious, is capable of rational demonstration, though not to the reason of man, in the present state, and in some cases probably to no reason below that of the Divine nature. Truth is founded in reality, and for that reason is truth. Some truths therefore, which a revelation only could make known, will often appear to us rational, because consistent with what we already know. Meditation upon them, or experience of their reality in new circumstances in which we

may be placed, may enlarge that evidence; and thus our views of the conformity of many of the doctrines revealed, with the nature and reality of things, may acquire a growing clearness and distinctness. The observations of others also may, by reading and converse, be added to our own, and often serve to carry out our minds into some new and richer vein of thought. Thus it is that reason, instead of being fettered, as some pretend, by being regulated, is enlightened by revelation, and enabled from the first

principles, and by the grand landmarks which it furnishes, to pursue its inquiries into many subjects to an extent which enriches and ennobles the human intellect, and administers continual food to the strength of religious principle. This, however, is not the case with all subjects. Many, as we have already seen, are from their very nature wholly incapable of investigation. At the first step we launch into darkness, and find in religion as well as in natural philosophy, beyond certain limits,

insurmountable barriers, which bid defiance to human penetration; and even where the rational evidence of a truth but nakedly stated in revelation, or very partially developed, can by human powers be extended, that circumstance gives us no qualification to judge of the truth of another doctrine which is stated on the mere authority of the dispenser of the revelation, and of which there is no evidence at all to our reason.

It may belong to subjects of another and a higher class;

and if it be found in the Record, is not to be explained away by principles which we may have drawn from other truths, though revealed, for those inferences have no higher an authority than the strength of our own fallible powers, and consequently cannot be put in competition with the declarations of an infallible teacher, ascertained by just rules of grammatical and literary interpretation.

(5) See note A at the end of this chapter, in which two

common objections are answered.

Note A. - Page 103.

"In whatever point of view," says an able living author, " the subject be placed, the same arguments which show the incapability of man, by the light of nature, to discover religious truth, will serve likewise to show, that, when it is revealed to him, he is not warranted in judging of it merely by the notions which he had previously formed. For is it not a solecism to affirm, that man's natural reason

is a fit standard for measuring the wisdom or truth of those things with which it is wholly unacquainted, except so far as they have been supernaturally

"But what, then," (an objector will say,)" is the province of reason? Is it altogether useless? Or are we to be precluded from using it in this most important of all concerns, for our security against error?"

Our answer is, that we do not lessen either the utility or the dignity of human

reason, by thus confining the exercise of it within those natural boundaries which the Creator himself hath assigned to it. We admit, with the Deist, that " reason is the foundation of all certitude:" and we admit, therefore, that it is fully competent to judge of the credibility of anything which is proposed to it as a Divine revelation. But we deny that it has a right to dispute (because we maintain that it has not the ability to disprove) the wisdom or the truth of those things which revelation proposes to its

acceptance. Reason is to judge whether those things be indeed so revealed: and this judgment it is to form, from the evidence to that effect. In this respect it is "the foundation of certitude," because it enables us to ascertain the fact, that God hath spoken to us.

But this fact once established, the credibility, nay, the certainty of the things revealed, follows as of necessary consequence; since no deduction of reason can be more indubitable than this, that

whatever God reveals must be true. Here, then, the authority of reason ceases. Its judgment is finally determined by the fact of the revelation itself: and it has thenceforth nothing to do, but to believe and to obey.

"But are we to believe every doctrine, however incomprehensible, however mysterious, nay, however seemingly contradictory to sense and reason?"

We answer, that revelation is supposed to treat of subjects with which man's natural reason is not

conversant. It is therefore to be expected, that it should communicate some truths not to be fully comprehended by human understandings. But these we may safely receive, upon the authority which declares them, without danger of violating truth. Real and evident contradictions, no man can, indeed, believe, whose intellects are sound and clear. But such contradictions are no more proposed for our belief, than impossibilities are enjoined for our practice: though things difficult to

understand, as well as things hard to perform, may perhaps be required of us, for the trial of our faith and resolution. Seeming contradictions may also occur: but these may seem to be such because they are slightly or superficially considered, or because they are judged of by principles inapplicable to the subject, and without so clear a knowledge of the nature of the things revealed, as may lead us to form an adequate conception of them. These, however, afford no solid argument against the truth of what is

proposed to our belief: since, unless we had really such an insight into the mysterious parts of revelation as might enable us to prove them to be contradictory and false, we have no good ground for rejecting them; and we only betray our own ignorance and perverseness in refusing to take God's word for the truth of things which pass man's understanding.

The simple question, indeed, to be considered, is, whether it be reasonable to believe, upon competent

authority, things which we can neither discover ourselves, nor, when discovered, fully and clearly comprehend? Now every person of common observation must be aware, that unless he be content to receive solely upon the testimony of others a great variety of information, much of which he may be wholly unable to account for or explain, he could scarcely obtain a competency of knowledge to carry him safely through the common concerns of life. And with respect to scientific truths, the

greatest masters in philosophy know full well that many things are reasonably to be believed, nay, must be believed on sure and certain grounds of conviction, though they are absolutely incomprehensible by our understandings, and even so difficult to be reconciled with other truths of equal certainty, as to carry the appearance of being contradictory and impossible. This will serve to show, that it is not contrary to reason to believe, on sufficient authority, some things

which cannot be comprehended, and some things which, from the narrow and circumscribed views we are able to take of them, appear to be repugnant to our notions of truth. The ground on which we believe such things, is the strength and certainty of the evidence with which they are accompanied. And this is precisely the ground on which we are required to believe the truths of revealed religion. The evidence that they come from God, is, to reason itself, as incontrovertible a proof that they are true, as

in matters of human science would be the evidence of sense, or of mathematical demonstration.

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12 ANTIQUITY OF THE SCRIPTURES

From the preparatory course of argument and observation which has been hitherto pursued, we proceed to the investigation of the question, whether there are sufficient reasons to conclude that such a

revelation of truth, as we have seen to be so necessary for the instruction and moral correction of mankind, is to be found in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments; a question of the utmost importance, inasmuch as, if not found there, there are the most cogent reasons for concluding, that a revelation was never vouchsafed to man, or that it is irretrievably lost.

No person living in an enlightened country will for a moment contend, that

the Koran of Mohammed, or any of the reputed sacred writings of the Chinese, Hindus, or Buddhists, can be put into competition with the Bible; so that it is universally acknowledged among us, that there is but one book in the world which has claims to Divine authority so presumptively substantial as to be worthy of serious examination, - and therefore if the advantage of supernatural and infallible instruction has been afforded to man, it may be concluded to be found in that alone.

This consideration indicates the proper temper of mind with which such an inquiry ought to be approached.

Instead of wishing to discover that the claims of the Scriptures to Divine authority are unfounded, (the case it is to be feared with too many,) every humble and sincere man, who, conscious of his own mental infirmity, and recollecting the perplexities in which the wisest of men have been involved on religious and moral subjects, will wish to find

at length an infallible guide, and will examine the evidences of the Bible with an anxious desire that he may find sufficient reason to ac knowledge their Divine authority; and he will feel, that, should he be disappointed, he has met with a painful misfortune, and not a matter for triumph. If this temper of mind, which is perfectly consistent with full, and even severe examination of the claims of Scripture, does not exist, the person destitute of it is neither a sincere nor an earnest inquirer after truth.

We may go farther and say, though we have no wish to prejudge the argument, that if the person examining the Holy Scriptures in order to ascertain the truth of their pretensions to Divine authority, has had the means of only a general acquaintance with their contents, he ought, if a lover of virtue as well as truth, to be predisposed in their favor; and that, if he is not, the moral state of his heart is liable to great suspicion. For that the theological system of the Scriptures is in favor of the

highest virtues, cannot be denied. It both prescribes them, and affords the strongest possible motives to their cultivation. Love to God, and to all mankind; meekness, courtesy, charity; the government of the appetites and affections within the rules of temperance; the renunciation of evil imaginations, and sins of the heart; exact justice in all our dealings;- these, and indeed every other virtue, civil, social, domestic, and personal, are clearly taught, and solemnly commanded: and it might

be confidently put to every candid person, however skeptical, whether the universal observance of the morality of the Scriptures, by all ranks and nations, would not produce the most beneficial changes in society, and secure universal peace, friendship, and happiness. This he would not deny; this has been acknowledged by some infidel writers themselves; and if so, - if after all the bewildering speculations of the wisest men on religious and moral subjects, and which, as we have seen, led to nothing

definite and influential, a book is presented to us which shows what virtue is, and the means of attaining it; which enforces it by sufficient sanctions, and points every individual and every community to a certain remedy for all their vices, disorders, and miseries;- we must renounce all title to be considered lovers of virtue and lovers of our species, if we do not feel ourselves interested in the establishment of its claims to Divine authority; and because we love virtue, we shall wish that the proof of

this important point may be found satisfactory. This surely is the temper of mind we ought to bring to such an inquiry; and the rejection of the Scriptures by those who are not under its influence, is rather a presumption in their favor than a consideration which throws upon them the least discredit.

In addition to the proofs which have been given of the necessity of a revelation, both from the reason of things, and the actual circumstances of the world, it has been

established, that miracles actually performed, and prophecies really uttered and clearly accomplished, are satisfactory proofs of the authority of a communication of the will of God through the agency of men. We have however stated, that in cases where we are not witnesses of the miracles, and auditors of the predictions, but obtain information respecting them from some record, we must, before we can admit the force of the argument drawn from them, be assured, that the record was early and faithfully

made, and has been uncorruptly kept, with respect to the miracles; and, with respect to the prophecies, that they were also uttered and recorded previously to those events occurring which are alleged to be accomplishments of them. These are points necessary to be ascertained before it is worth the trouble to inquire, whether the alleged miracles have any claim to be considered as miraculous in a proper sense, and the predictions as revelations from an omniscient, and,

consequently, a Divine Being.

The first step in this inquiry is, to ascertain the existence, age, and actions, of the leading persons mentioned in Scripture as the instruments by whom it is professed the revelations they contain were made known.

With respect to these Persons it is not necessary that our attention should be directed to more than two, Moses and Christ, - one the reputed agent of the Mosaic, the other the author of the Christian

revelation; because the evidence which establishes their existence and actions, and the period of both, will also establish all that is stated in the same records as to the subordinate and succeeding agents.

The Biblical record states, that Moses was the leader and legislator of the nation of the Jews near sixteen hundred years before the Christian era, according to the common chronology. This is grounded upon the tradition and national history of the Jews; and it is certain, that so far from

there being any reason to doubt the fact, much less to suppose, with an extravagant fancy of some modern infidels, that Moses was a mythological personage, the very same principles of historical evidence which assure us of the truth of any unquestioned fact of profane history, assure us of the truth of this. It cannot be doubted but that the Jews existed very anciently as a nation. It is equally certain, that it has been an uninterrupted and universally received tradition among them in all

ages, that Moses led them out of Egypt, and first gave them their system of laws and religion. The history of that event they have in writing, and also the laws attributed to him. There is nothing in the leading events of their history contradicted by remaining authentic historical records of those nations with whom they were geographically and politically related, to support any suspicion of its accuracy; and as their institutions must have been established and enjoined by some political authority, and bear the

marks of a systematic arrangement, established at once, and not growing up under the operation of circumstances at distant periods, to one superior and commanding mind they are most reasonably to be attributed. The Jews refer them to Moses, and if this be denied, no proof can be offered in favor of any other person being entitled to that honor. The history is therefore uncontradicted by any opposing evidence, and can only be denied on some principle of skepticism which would equally shake

the foundations of all history whatever.

The same observations may be made as to the existence of the Founder of the Christian religion.

In the records of the New Testament he is called Jesus Christ, because he professed to be the Messiahs predicted in the Jewish Scriptures, and was acknowledged as such by his followers; and his birth is fixed upward of eighteen centuries ago. This also is at least uncontradicted testimony. The Christian religion exists, and must

have had an author. Like the institutions of Moses, it bears the evidence of being the work of one mind; and, as a theological system, presents no indications of a gradual and successive elaboration. There was a time when there was no such religion as that of Christianity, and when pagan idolatry and Judaism universally prevailed; it follows, that there once flourished a teacher to whom it owed its origin, and all tradition and history unite in their testimony, that that lawgiver was Jesus Christ.

No other person has ever been adduced, living at a later period, as the founder of this form of religion.

To the existence, and the respective antiquity ascribed in the Scriptures to the founders of the Jewish and Christian religion, many ancient writers give ample testimony; who being themselves neither of the Jewish nor Christian religion, cannot be suspected of having any design to furnish evidence of the truth of either. Manetho, Cheremon,

Apollonius, and Lysimachus, beside some other ancient Egyptians, whose histories are now lost, are quoted by Josephus, as extant in his days; and passages are collected from them, in which they agree that Moses was the leader of the Jews when they departed from Egypt, and the founder of their laws. Strabo, who flourished in the century before Christ, (Geog. 1. 16,) gives an account of the law of Moses, as forbidding images, and limiting Divine worship to one invisible

and universal Being. Justin, a Roman historian, in his 36th book devotes a chapter to an account of the origin of the Jews; represents them as sprung from ten sons of Israel, and speaks of Moses as the commander of the Jews who went out of Egypt, of the institution of the Sabbath, and the priesthood of Aaron. Pliny speaks of Moses as giving rise to a sect of Magicians, probably with reference to his contest with the magicians of Egypt. Tacitus says, "Moses gave a new form of worship to the

Jews, and a system of religious ceremonies, the reverse of everything known to any other age or country." Juvenal, in his 14th Satire, mentions Moses as the author of a volume, which was preserved with great care among the Jews, by which the worship of images and eating swine's flesh were forbidden; and circumcision and the observation of the Sabbath strictly enjoined. Longinus cites Moses as the lawgiver of the Jews, and praises the sublimity of his style in the account he gives of the

creation. The ORPHIC verses, which are very ancient, inculcate the worship of one God, as recommended by that law "which was given by him who was drawn out of the water, and received two tables of stone from the hand of God." - (Ens, Prap. Ev. 1.13, c. xii.) Diodorus Siculus, in his first book, when he treats of those who consider the gods to be the authors of their laws, adds, "Among the Jews was Moses, who called God by the name of Iaw, Iao," meaning Jehovah. Justin Martyr

expressly says, that most of the historians, poets, lawgivers, and philosophers of the Greeks, mention Moses as the leader and prince of the Jewish nation. From all these testimonies, and many more were it necessary might be adduced, it is clear that it was as commonly received among ancient nations, as among the Jews themselves, that Moses was the founder and lawgiver of the Jewish state.

As to Christ, it is only necessary to give the

testimony of two historians, whose antiquity no one ever thought of disputing. Suetonius mentions him by name, and says, that Claudius expelled from Rome those who adhered to his cause. (6) Tacitus records the progress which the Christian religion had made; the violent death its founder had suffered; that he flourished under the reign of Tiberius; that Pilate was then procurator of Judea; and that the original author of this profession was Christ. (7) Thus, not only the real

existence of the founder of Christianity, but the period in which he lived is exactly ascertained from writings, the genuineness of which has never been doubted.

(6) Judaeos impulsore Christo assidue tumultuintes Roma expulit. (Suet Edit Var. p. 544.) (7) Auctor nominis ejus Christus, qui Tiberio imperitante, per procuratorem Pentium Pilatum supplicio affectus erat. (Annul. 1. 5.)

The Antiquity or The Books which contain the history, the doctrines, and the laws,

of the Jewish and the Christian lawgivers, is next to be considered, and the evidence is not less satisfactory.

The importance of this fact in the argument is obvious. If the writings in question were made at, or very near, the time in which the miraculous acts recorded in them were performed, then the evidence of those events having occurred is rendered the stronger, for they were written at the time when many were still living who might have contradicted the narration

if false; and the improbability is also greater, that, in the very age and place when and where those events are said to have been performed, any writer would have dared to run the hazard of prompt, certain, and disgraceful detection. It is equally important in the evidence of prophecy; for if the predictions were recorded long before the events which accomplished them took place, then the only question which remains is, whether the accomplishment is satisfactory; for then the

evidence becomes irresistible.

With respect to the Scriptures of the Old Testament, the language in which they are written is a strong proof of their antiquity. The Hebrew ceased to be spoken as a living language soon after the Babylonish captivity, and the learned agree that there was no grammar made for the Hebrew till many ages after. The difficulty of a forgery, at any period after the time of that captivity, is therefore apparent. Of these books

too there was a Greek translation made about two hundred and eighty-seven years before the Christian era, and laid up in the Alexandrian library.

Josephus gives a catalogue of the sacred books among the Jews, in which he expressly mentions the five books of Moses, thirteen of the Prophets, four of Hymns and Moral Precepts; and if, as many critics maintain, Ruth was added to Judges, and the Lamentations of Jeremiah to his Prophecies, the number agrees with those

of the Old Testament as it is received at the present day.

The Samaritans, who separated from the Jews many hundred years before the birth of Christ, have in their language a Pentateuch, in the main exactly agreeing with the Hebrew; and the pagan writers before cited, with many others, speak of Moses not only as a lawgiver and a prince, but as the author of books esteemed sacred by the Jews. (8) (8) See note A at the end of this chapter, for

a larger proof of the above particulars.

If the writings of Moses then are not genuine, the forgery must have taken place at a very early period; but a few considerations will show, that at any time this was impossible.

These books could never have been surreptitiously put forth in the name of Moses, as the argument of Leslie most fully proves:- "It is impossible that those books should have been received as his, if not written by him, because they speak of themselves as

delivered by Moses, and kept in the ark from his time: ' And it came to pass when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book until they were finished, that Moses commanded the Levites who bore the ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying, Take the book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee,'

Deut. 31:24-26. A copy of this book was also to be left with the king: 'And it shall

be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites; and it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life,' &c, Deut. 18:18. This book of the law thus speaks of itself, not only as a history or relation of what things were done, but as the standing and municipal law and statutes of the nation of the Jews, binding the king as well as the people. Now in whatever age after Moses this book may be supposed

to have been forged, it was impossible that it could be received as truth, because it was not then to be found (as it professed to be) either in the ark or with the king, or any where else; for when first invented, every body must know that they had sever heard of it before.

"Could any man, now at this day, invent a book of statutes or acts of parliament for England, and make it pass upon the nation as the only book of statutes that ever they had known? As impossible was

it for the books of Moses (if they were invented in any age after Moses) to have been received for what they declare themselves to be, viz. the statutes and municipal law of the nation of the Jews: and to have persuaded the Jews, that they had owned and acknowledged these books, all along from the days of Moses, to that day in which they were first invented; that is, that they had owned them before they had ever so much as heard of them. Nay, more, the whole nation must, in an instant, forget their former

laws and government, if they could receive these books as being their former laws. And they could not otherwise receive them, because they vouched themselves so to be. Let me ask the Deists but one short question: Was there ever a book of sham laws, which were not the laws of the nation, palmed upon any people, since the world began? If not, with what face can they say this of the book of laws of the Jews? Why will they say that of them which they confess impossible in any nation, or among any people?

But they must be yet more unreasonable. For the books of Moses have a farther demonstration of their truth than even other law books have; for they not only contain the laws, but give a historical account of their institution, and the practice of them from that time: as of the Passover, in memory of the death of the first born in Egypt, Num. 8:17,18: and that the same day, all the first born of Israel, both of man and beast, were, by a perpetual law, dedicated to God: and the Levites taken for all the first born of the

children of Israel. That Aaron's rod, which budded, was kept in the ark, in memory of the rebellion, and wonderful destruction of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram; and for the confirmation of the priesthood to the tribe of Levi. As likewise the pot of manna, in memory of their having been fed with it forty years in the wilderness. That the brazen serpent was kept (which remained to the days of Hezekiah, 2 Kings 18:4,) in memory of that wonderful deliverance, by only looking upon it, from the

biting of the fiery serpents, Numbers 21:9. The feast of Pentecost, in memory of the dreadful appearance of God upon Mount Horeb,

&c.

"And beside these remembrances of particular actions and occurrences, there were other solemn institutions in memory of their deliverance out of Egypt, in the general, which included all the particulars. As of the Sabbath, Deut. 5:15. Their daily sacrifices and yearly expiation; their new moons, and several feasts

and fasts. So that there were yearly, monthly, weekly, daily remembrances and recognitions of these things.

"And not only so, but the books of the same Moses tell us, that a particular tribe (of Levi) was appointed and consecrated by God as his priests; by whose hands, and none other, the sacrifices of the people were to be offered, and these solemn institutions to be celebrated. That it was death for any other to

approach the altar. That their high priest wore a glorious mitre, and magnificent robes of God's own contrivance, with the miraculous Urim and Thummim in his breastplate, whence the Divine responses were given, Num. 27:21. That at his word the king and all the people were to go out, and to come in. That these Levites were likewise the chief judges even in all civil causes, and that it was death to resist their sentence, Deut. 17:8-13; 1 Chron. 23:4. Now whenever it can be

supposed that these books of Moses were forged in some ages after Moses, it is impossible they could have been received as true, unless the forgers could have made the whole nation believe, that they had received these books from their fathers, had been instructed in them when they were children, and had taught them to their children; moreover, that they had all been circumcised, and did circumcise their children, in pursuance to what was commanded in these books: that they had

observed the yearly Passover, the weekly Sabbath, the new moons, and all these several feasts, fasts, and ceremonies, commanded in these books: that they had never eaten any swine's flesh, or other meats prohibited in these books: that they had a magnificent tabernacle, with a visible priesthood to administer in it, which was confined to the tribe of Levi; over whom was placed a glorious high priest, clothed with great and mighty prerogatives, whose death only could deliver those that were fled

to the cities of refuge, Num. 35:25, 28. And that these priests were their ordinary judges, even in civil matters: I say, was it possible to have persuaded a whole nation of men, that they had known and practiced all these things if they had not done it? or, secondly, to have received a book for truth, which said they had practiced them, and appealed to that practice?

"But now let us descend to the utmost degree of supposition, viz. that these things were practiced,

before these books of Moses were forged; and that those books did only impose upon the nation, in making them believe that they had kept these observances in memory of such and such things as were inserted in those books.

"Well then, let us proceed upon this supposition, (however groundless,) and now, will not the same impossibilities occur, as in the former case? For, first, this must suppose that the Jews kept all these observances in memory of

nothing, or without knowing anything of their original, or the reason why they kept them. Whereas these very observances did express the ground and reason of their being kept, as the Passover, in memory of God's passing over the children of the Israelites, in that night wherein he slew all the first born of Egypt, and so of the rest,

"But, secondly, let us suppose, contrary both to reason and matter of fact, that the Jews did not know any reason at all why they kept these observances; yet

was it possible to put it upon them-that they had kept these observances in memory of what they had never heard of before that day, whensoever you will suppose that these books of Moses were first forged? For example, suppose I should now forge some romantic story of strange things done a thousand years ago; and, in confirmation of this, should endeavor to persuade the Christian world that they had all along, from that day to this, kept the first day of the week in memory of

such a hero, an Apollonius, a Barcosbas, or a Mohammed; and had all been baptized in his name; and swore by his name, and upon that very book (which I had then forged, and which they never saw before,) in their public judicatures; that this book was their Gospel and law, which they had ever since that time, these thousand years past, universally received and owned, and none other. I would ask any Deist, whether he thinks it possible that such a cheat could pass, or such a legend be received as the

Gospel of Christians, and that they could be made believe that they never had any other Gospel?

"Let me give one very familiar example more in this case. There is the Stonehenge in Salisbury Plain, everybody knows it; and yet none knows the reason why those great stones were set there, or by whom, or in memory of what.

"Now, suppose I should write a book to-morrow, and tell them that these stones were set up by Hercules, Polyphemus, or

Garagantua, in memory of such and such of their actions. And for a farther confirmation of this, should say in this book, that it was written at the time when such actions were done, and by the very actors themselves, or eye witnesses. And that this book had been received as truth, and quoted by authors of the greatest reputation in all ages since.

Moreover that this book was well known in England, and enjoined by act of parliament to be taught our children, and

that we did teach it to our children, and had been taught it ourselves when we were children. I ask any Deist, whether he thinks this could pass upon England? and whether, if I, or any other should insist upon it, we should not, instead of being believed, be sent to Bedlam?

"Now, let us compare this with the Stonehenge, as I may call it, or twelve great stones set up at Gilgal, which is told in the fourth chapter of Joshua. There it is said, verse 6, that the reason why they were set

up was, that when their children in after ages, should ask the meaning of it, it should be told them.

"And the thing in memory of which they were set up, was such as could not possibly be imposed upon that nation, at that time when it was said to be done; it was as wonderful and miraculous as their passage through the Red Sea.

"For notice was given to the Israelites the day before, of this great miracle to be done, Josh, 3:5.

It was done at noon-day before the whole nation. And when the waters of Jordan were divided, it was not at any low ebb, but at the time when that river overflowed all his banks, verse 15. And it was done, not by winds, or in length of time which winds must take to do it; but all on the sudden, as soon as the 'feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water, then the waters which came down from above, stood and rose up upon a ' heap, very far from the city Adam, that is beside Zaretan; and those

that came down toward the sea of the plain, even the Salt sea, failed, and were cut off: and the people passed over, right against Jericho. The priests stood in the midst of Jordan till all the armies of Israel had passed over. And it came to pass, when the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord were come up out of the midst of Jordan, and the soles of the priests' feet were lift up upon the dry land, that the waters of Jordan returned into their place, and flowed over all his banks as they did before. And the people

came out of Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and encamped in Gilgal on the east border of Jericho, and those twelve stones which they took out of Jordan did Joshua pitch in Gilgal. And he spake unto the children of Israel, saying, When your children shall ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean these stones? Then shall ye let your children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry land. For the Lord your God dried up the waters of Jordan from before you, until ye were passed over;

as the Lord your God did to the Red Sea, which he dried up from before us, until we were gone over, that all the people of the earth might know the hand of the Lord, that it is mighty: that ye might fear the Lord your God for ever,' Chap, 5, from verse 18.

"Now, to form our argument, let us suppose that there never was any such thing as that passage over Jordan; that these stones at Gilgal were set up upon some other occasion, in some after age; and

then, that some designing man invented this book of Joshua, and said that it was written by Joshua at that time, and gave this stonage at Gilgal, for a testimony of the truth of it; would not everybody say to him, We know the stonage at Gilgal, but we never heard before of this reason for it, nor of this book of Joshua. Where has it been all this while? And where, and how came you, after so many ages, to find it? Beside, this book tells us, that this passage over Jordan was ordained to be taught our children, from age to age; and,

therefore, that they were always to be instructed in the meaning of that stonage at Gilgal, as a memorial of it. But we were never taught it, when we were children; nor did ever teach our children any such thing. And it is not likely that it could have been forgotten, while so remarkable a stonage did continue, which was set up for that and no other end!

"And if, for the reasons before given, no such imposition could be put upon us as to the stonage in Salisbury Plain; how

much less could it be to the stonage at Gilgal?

"And if, where we know not the reason of a bare naked monument, such a sham reason cannot be imposed, how much more is it impossible to impose upon us in actions and observances, which we celebrate in memory of particular passages? How impossible to make us forget those passages which we daily commemorate; and persuade us that we had always kept such institutions in memory of

what we never heard of before; that is, that we knew it before we knew it!"

This able reasoning has never been refuted, nor can be; and if the books of the law must have been written by Moses, it is as easy to prove that Moses himself could not in the nature of the thing have deceived the people by an imposture, and a pretence of miraculous attestations, in order, like some later lawgivers among the heathens, to bring the people more willingly to submit to his institutions.

The very instances of miracle he gives, rendered this impossible.

"Suppose," says the same writer, " any man should pretend, that yesterday he divided the Thames, in presence of all the people of London, and carried the whole city, men, women, and children, over to Southwark, on dry land, the waters standing like walls on both sides: I say, it is morally impossible that he could persuade the people of London, that this was true, when every man, woman, and child, could

contradict him, and say, that this was a notorious falsehood, for that they had not seen the Thames so divided, nor had gone over on dry land.

"As to Moses, I suppose it will be allowed me, that he could not have persuaded 600,000 men, that he had brought them out of Egypt, through, the Red Sea; fed them forty years, without bread, by miraculous manna, and the other matters of fact, recorded in his books, if they had not been true. Because every man's senses that was then

alive must have contradicted it. And therefore he must have imposed upon all their senses, if he could have made them believe it, when it was false and no such things done.

"From the same reason, it was equally impossible for him to have made them receive his five books as truth, and not to have rejected them as a manifest imposture, which told of all these things as done before their eyes, if they had not been so done. See how positively he speaks to

them, Deut. 11:2, to verse 8: ' And know you this day, for I speak not with your children, which have not known, and which have not seen the chastisement of the Lord your God, his greatness, his mighty hand, and his stretched-out arm, and his miracles, and his acts, which he did in the midst of Egypt, unto Pharaoh the king of Egypt, and unto all his land, and what he did unto the army of Egypt, unto their horses, and to their chariots; how he made the water of the Red Sea to overflow them as they pursued after you;

and how the Lord hath destroyed them unto this day: And what he did unto you in the wilderness, until ye came unto this place; and what he did unto Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliah, the son of Reuben, how the earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up, and their households, and their tents, and all the substance that was in their possession, in the midst of all Israel. But your eyes have seen all the great acts of the Lord, which he did,' &c.

"From hence we must suppose it impossible that these books of Moses (if an imposture) could have been invented and put upon the people who were then alive when all these things were said to be done."

By these arguments (9) the genuineness and authenticity of the books of Moses are established; and as to those of the prophets, which, with some predictions in the writings of Moses, comprise the prophetic branch of the evidence of the Divine

authority of the revelations they contain, it can be proved both from Jewish tradition, the list of Josephus, the Greek translation, and from their being quoted by ancient writers, that they existed many ages before several of those events occurred, to which we shall refer in the proper place as eminent and unequivocal instances of prophetic accomplishment. This part of the argument will therefore be also sufficiently established: the prophecy will be shown to have been delivered long

before the event, and the event will be proved to be a fulfillment of the prophecy. A more minute examination of the date of the prophetic books rather belongs to those who write expressly on the canon of Scripture.

(9) The reasoning of Leslie, so incontrovertible as to the four last books of the Pentateuch, does not so fully apply to the book of Genesis. Few, however, will dispute the genuineness of this, if that of the other books of Moses be conceded. That the book of

Genesis must have been written prior to the other books of the Pentateuch is, however, certain, for Exodus constantly refers to events nowhere recorded but in the book of Genesis; and without the book of Genesis, the abrupt commencement of Exodus would have been as unintelligible to the Jews as it would be to us.

The Pentateuch must therefore be considered as one book, under five divisions, having a mutual coherence and dependence.

The same author, from whom we have already largely quoted, (Leslie,) applies his celebrated four rules for determining the truth of matters of fact in general, with equal force to the facts of the Gospel history as to those contained in the Mosaic writings. The rules are, "1. That the matter of fact be such, as that men's outward senses, their eyes and ears, may be judges of it.-2. That it be done publicly in the face of the world.-3. That not only public monuments be kept up in memory of it, but

some outward actions be performed.-4. That such monuments and such actions and observances be instituted, and do commence from the time that the matter of fact was done."

We have seen the manner in which these rules are applied to the books of Moses. The author thus applies them to the Gospel:-

"I come now to show, that as in the matters of fact of Moses, so likewise all these four marks do meet in the matters of fact which are

recorded in the Gospel of our blessed Savior. And my work herein will be the shorter, because all that is said before of Moses and his books, is every way as applicable to Christ and his Gospel. His works and his miracles are there said to be done publicly in the face of the world, as he argued to his accusers,' I spake openly to the world, and in secret have I said nothing,' John 18:20. It is told, Acts 2:41, that three thousand at one time, and Acts 4:4, that above five thousand at another time, were converted upon conviction

of what themselves had seen, what had been done publicly before their eyes, wherein it was impossible to have imposed upon them. Therefore here were the two first rules before mentioned.

"Then for the two second: Baptism and the Lord's Supper were instituted as perpetual memorials of these things; and they were not instituted in after ages, but at the very time when these things were said to be done; and have been observed without interruption, in all ages

through the whole Christian world, down all the way from that time to this. And Christ himself did ordain apostles and other ministers of his Gospel, to preach and administer the sacraments; and to govern his Church: and that always, even unto the end of the world, Matt. 18:20. Accordingly, they have continued by regular succession to this day: and no doubt ever shall while the earth shall last. So that the Christian clergy are as notorious a matter of fact, as the tribe of Levi among the Jews.

And the Gospel is as much a law to the Christians, as the book of Moses to the Jews: and it being part of the matters of act related in the Gospel, that such an order of men were appointed by Christ, and to continue to the end of the world; consequently, if the Gospel was a fiction, and invented (as it must be) in some ages after Christ; then, at that time when it was first invented, there could be no such order of clergy, as derived themselves from the institution of Christ; which must give the lie to the

Gospel, and demonstrate the whole to be false. And the matters of fact of Christ being pressed to be true, no otherwise than as there was at that time, (whenever the Deists will suppose the Gospel to be forged,) not only public sacraments of Christ's institution, but an order of clergy, likewise, of his appointment to administer them; and it being impossible there could be any such things before they were invented, it is as impossible that they should be received when invented. And therefore, by what was said above, it was

as impossible to have imposed upon mankind in this matter, by inventing of it in after ages, as at the time when those things were said to be done.

"The matters of fact of Mohammed, or what is fabled of the heathen deities, do all want some of the aforesaid four rules, whereby the certainty of matters of fact is demonstrated, First, for Mohammed, he pretended to no miracles, as he tells us in his Alcoran, c. 6, &c; and those which are commonly told of him pass

among the Mohammedans themselves but as legendary fables; and, as such, are rejected by the wise and learned among them: as the legends of their saints are in the Church of Rome. See Dr. Prideaux's Life of Mohammed, page 34.

"But, in the next place, those which are told of him do all want the two first rules before mentioned, For his pretended converse with the moon; his Mersa, or night journey from Mecca to Jerusalem, and thence to heaven, &c, were

not performed before anybody. We have only his own word for them. And they are as groundless as the delusions of the Fox or Muggleton among ourselves. The same is to be said (in the second place) of the fables of the heathen gods, of Mercury's stealing sheep, Jupiter's turning himself into a bull, and the like; beside the folly and unworthiness of such senseless pretended miracles.

"It is true the heathen deities had their priests: they had likewise feasts,

games, and other public institutions in memory of them. But all these want the fourth mark, viz. that such priesthood and institutions should commence from the time that such things as they commemorate were said to be done; otherwise they cannot secure after ages from the imposture, by detecting it, at the time when first invented, as hath been argued before. But the Bacchanalia, and other heathen feasts, were instituted many ages after what was reported of these gods was said to be done,

and therefore can be no proof. And the priests of Bacchus, Apollo, &c, were not ordained by these supposed gods; but were appointed by others, in after ages, only in honor to them. And therefore these orders of priests are no evidence to the matters of fact which are reported of their gods.

"Now to apply what has been said. You may challenge all the Deists in the world to show any action that is fabulous, which has all the four rules or marks before mentioned. No, it is

impossible. And (to resume a little what is spoken to before) the histories of Exodus and the Gospel never could have been received, if they had not been true; because the institution of the priesthood of Levi, and of Christ; of the Sabbath, the Passover, of Circumcision, of Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, &c, are there related, as descending all the way down from those times, without interruption. And it is full as impossible to persuade men that they had been circumcised or baptized,

had circumcised or baptized their children, celebrated Passovers, Sabbaths, sacraments, &c, under the government and administration of a certain order of priests, if they had done none of these things, as to make them believe that they had gone through seas upon dry land, seen the dead raised, &c. And without believing these, it was impossible that either the Law or the Gospel could have been received.

"And the truth of the matters of fact of Exodus and the Gospel, being no

otherwise pressed upon men, than as they have practiced such public institutions, it is appealing to the senses of mankind for the truth of them; and makes it impossible for any to have invented such stories in after ages, without a palpable detection of the cheat when first invented; as impossible as to have imposed upon the senses of mankind, at the time when such public matters of fact were said to be done."

(1) Sec Note B at the end of this chapter, in which the

same kind of argument is illustrated by the miraculous gift of tongues.

But other evidence of the truth of the Gospel history, beside that which arises from this convincing reasoning, may be adduced.

In the first place, the narrative of the evangelists, as to the actions, &c, of Christ, cannot be rejected without renouncing all faith in history, any more than to deny that he really existed.

"We have the same reason to believe that the evangelists have given us a true history of the life and transactions of JESUS, as we have that Xenophon and Plato have given us a faithful and just narrative of the character and doctrines of the excellent SOCRATES. The sacred writers were, in every respect, qualified for giving a real circumstantial detail of the life and religion of the person whose memoirs they have transmitted down to us. They were the select companions and familiar friends of the hero

of their story. They had free and liberal access to him at all times.

They attended his public discourses, and in his moments of retirement he unbosomed his whole soul to them without disguise. They were daily witnesses of his sincerity and goodness of heart.

They were spectators of the amazing operations he performed and of the silent unostentatious manner in which he performed them. In private he explained to them the doctrines of his religion in the most

familiar, endearing converse, and gradually initiated them into the principles of his Gospel, as their Jewish prejudices admitted. Some of these writers were his inseparable attendants, from the commencement of his public ministry to his death, and could give the world as true and faithful a narrative of his character and instructions, as Xenophon was enabled to publish of the life and philosophy of Socrates. If Plato hath been in every respect qualified to compose an historical

account of the behavior of his master in his imprisonment; of the philosophic discourses he addressed to his friends, before he drank the poisonous bowl; as he constantly attended him in those unhappy scenes; was present at those mournful interviews; (2)-in like manner was the Apostle JOHN fitted for compiling a just and genuine narration of the last consolatory discourses our Lord delivered to his dejected followers, a little before his last sufferings, and of the unhappy exit he

made, with its attendant circumstances, of which he was a personal spectator. The foundation of these things cannot be invalidated, without invalidating the faith of history. No writers have enjoyed more propitious, few have ever enjoyed such favorable opportunities for publishing just accounts of persons and things as the evangelists. Most of the Greek and Roman historians lived long after the persons they immortalize, and the events they record. The sacred writers

commemorate actions they saw, discourses they heard, persecutions they supported; describe characters with which they were familiarly conversant, and transactions and scenes in which they themselves were intimately interested. The pages of their history are impressed with every feature of credibility: an artless simplicity characterizes all their writings.

Nothing can be farther from vain ostentation and popular applause. No studied arts to dress up a

cunningly devised fable. No vain declamation after any miracle of our Saviour they relate. They record these astonishing operations with the same dispassionate coolness, as if they had been common transactions, without that ostentatious rhodomontade which enthusiasts and impostors universally employ. They give us a plain, unadorned narration of these amazing feats of supernatural power saying nothing previously to raise our expectation, or after their performance breaking forth into any

exclamation-but leaving the reader to draw the conclusion. The writers of these books are distinguished above all the authors who ever wrote accounts of persons and things, for their sincerity and integrity. Enthusiasts and impostors never proclaim to the world the weakness of their understanding, and the defects of their character. The evangelists honestly acquaint the reader with the lowness of their station, the indigence of their circumstances, the inveteracy of their national

prejudices, their dullness of apprehension, their weakness of faith, their ambitious views, and the warm contentions they agitated among themselves. They even tell us how they basely deserted their Master, by a shameful precipitate flight, when he was seized by his enemies; and that after his crucifixion, they had all again returned to their former secular employments-forever resigning all the hopes they had once fondly cherished, and abandoning the cause in which they had so long

been engaged, notwithstanding all the proofs which had been exhibited, and the conviction they had before entertained, that JESUS was the Messiah, and that his religion was from God. A faithful picture this, held up to the reader, for him to contemplate the true features of the writer's mind. Such men as these were as far from being deceived themselves, as they were incapable of imposing a false hood upon others. The sacred regard they had for truth appears in everything they relate.

They mention, with many affecting circumstances, the obstinate, unreasonable incredulity of one of their associates-not convinced but by ocular and sensible demonstration, They might have concealed from the world their own faults and follies-or if they had chosen to mention them, might have alleged plausible reasons to soften and extenuate them. But they related, without disguise, events and facts just as they happened, and left them to speak their own language. So that to reject a

history thus circumstanced, and impeach the veracity of writers furnished with these qualifications for giving the most just accounts of personal characters and transactions, which they enjoyed the best opportunity for accurately observing and knowing, is an affront offered to the reason and understanding of mankind; a solecism against the laws of truth and history, which would, with equal reason, lead men to disbelieve everything related in

Herodotus, Thucydides, Diodorus Siculus, Livy, and Tacitus; to confound all history with fable and fiction; truth with falsehood, and veracity with imposture; and not to credit anything how well soever attested;- that there were such kings as the Stuarts, or such places as Paris and Rome, because we are not indulged with ocular conviction of them. The truth of the Gospel history [independent of the question of the inspiration of the sacred writers] rests upon the same basis with the truth of other ancient

books, and its pretensions are to be impartially examined by the same rules by which we judge of the credibility of all other historical monuments. And if we compare the merit of the sacred writers, as historians, with that of other writers, we shall be convinced, that they are inferior to none whoever wrote, either with regard to knowledge of persons, acquaintance with facts, candor of mind, and reverence for truth" (HARWOOD'S Introduction to the New Testament.) (2) Quid

dicam de Socrate, (says Cicero,) cujus morti illachrymari soleo, Platonem legens.-De Natura Deorum, p. 329, Edit. Dames, 1723, - See also Plato's Phaedo, passim, particularly pages 311, 312.-Edit. Forster, Oion. 1741.

A second source of evidence to the truth of the history of the evangelists, may be brought from the testimonies of adversaries and heathens to the leading facts which they record.

No public contradiction of this history was ever put

forth by the Jewish rulers to stop the progress of a hateful religion, though they had every motive to contradict it, both in justification of themselves, who were publicly charged as "murderers" of the "Just One," and to preserve the people from the infection of the spreading delusion. No such contradiction has been handed down, and none is adverted to or quoted by any ancient writer. This silence is not unimportant evidence; but the direct testimonies to the facts are numerous and important.

We have already quoted the testimonies of Tacitus and Suetonius to the existence of Jesus Christ, the Founder of the Christian religion, and of his crucifixion in the reign of Tiberius, and during the procurator ship of Pontius Pilate, the time in which the evangelists place that event.

Other references to heathen authors, who incidentally allude to Christ, his religion, and followers, might be given; such as Martial, Juvenal, Epictetus, Trajan, the

younger Pliny, Adrian, Apuleius, Lucian of Samosata, and others; some of whom also afford testimonies to the destruction of Jerusalem, at the time, and in the circumstances predicted by our Savior, and to the antiquity and genuineness of the books of the New Testament. But as it is well observed by the learned Lardner, in his "Collection of Jewish and Heathen Testimonies," (vol. iv, p. 330,)

"Among all the testimonies to Christianity which we

have met with in the first ages, none are more valuable and important than the testimonies of those learned philosophers who wrote against us; CELSUS, in the second century, PORPHYRY and HIEROCLES in the third, and JULIAN in the fourth." Referring to LARDNER for full information on this point, a brief exhibition of the admissions of these adversaries will be satisfactory.

CELSUS wrote against Christianity not much above one hundred and

thirty years after our Lord's ascension, and his books were answered by the celebrated ORIGEN. The following is a summary of the references of this writer to the Gospel history, by Leland. (Answer to Christianity as old as the Creation, vol. ii, c. 5.) The passages at large may be seen in Lardner's Testimonies.

Celsus, a most bitter enemy of Christianity, who began in the second century, produces many passages out of the Gospels. He represents Jesus to have

lived but a few years ago. He mentions his being born of a virgin; the angel's appearing to Joseph on occasion of Mary's being with child; the star that appeared at his birth; the wise men that came to worship him when an infant; and Herod's massacring the children; Joseph's fleeing with the, child into Egypt by the admonition of an angel; the Holy Ghost descending on Jesus like a dove when he was baptized by John, and the voice from heaven declaring him to be the Son of God; his going about

with his disciples, his healing the sick and lame, and raising the dead; his foretelling his own sufferings and resurrection; his being betrayed and forsaken by his own disciples; his suffering both of his own accord and in obedience to his heavenly Father; his grief and trouble, and his praying, Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! the ignominious treatment he met with; the robe that was put upon him, the crown of thorns, the reed put into his hand; his drinking vinegar and

gall, and his being scourged and crucified; his being seen after his resurrection by a fanatical woman, (as he calls her, meaning Mary Magdalene,) and by his own companions and disciples; his showing them his hands that were pierced, the marks of his punishment. He also mentions the angels being seen at his sepulcher, and that some said it was one angel, others, that it was two; by which he hints at the seeming variation in the accounts given of it by the evangelists.

"It is true, he mentions all these things only with a design to ridicule and expose them. But they furnish us with an uncontested proof, that the Gospel was then extant. Accordingly he expressly tells the Christians, These things we have produced out of your own writings, p. 106. And he all along supposed them to have been written by Christ's own disciples, that lived and conversed with him; though he pretends they feigned many things for the honor of their Master, p. 69, 70.

And he pretends, that he could tell many other things relative to Jesus, beside those things that were written of him by his own disciples; but that he willingly passed by them, p. 67. We may conclude from his expressions, both that he was sensible that these accounts were written by Christ's own disciples, (and indeed he never pretends to contest this,) and that he was not able to produce any contrary accounts to invalidate them, as he certainly would have done, if it had been in his power: since no man ever wrote

with greater virulence against Christianity than he. And indeed, how was it possible for ten or eleven publicans and boatmen, as he calls Christ's disciples by way of contempt, (p. 47,) to have imposed such things on the world, if they had not been true, so as to persuade such vast multitudes to embrace a new and despised religion, contrary to all their prejudices and interests, and to believe in one that had been crucified!

"There are several other things, which show that

Celsus was acquainted with the Gospel. He produces several of our Savior's sayings, there recorded, as that it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God; that to him who smites us on one cheek, we must turn the other; that it is not possible to serve two masters; his precept against thought fullness for to-morrow, by a comparison drawn from crows and lilies; his foretelling that false prophets should arise and work wonders, He

mentions also some passages of the Apostle Paul, such as these: The world is crucified unto me and I unto the world;- the wisdom of man is foolishness with God;- an idol is nothing.

"The use I would make of all this is, that it appears here with an uncontested evidence, by the testimony of one of the most malicious and virulent adversaries the Christian religion ever had, and who was also a man of considerable parts and learning, that the writings

of the evangelists were extant in his time, which was the next century to that in which the apostles lived; and that those accounts were written by Christ's own disciples, and consequently that they were written in the very age in which the facts related were done, and when, therefore, it would have been the easiest thing in the world to have convicted them of falsehood, if they had not been true."

Porphyry flourished about the year 270, a man of great abilities; and his

work against the Christians, in fifteen books, was long esteemed by the Gentiles, and thought worthy of being answered by Eusebius, and others in great repute for learning. He was well acquainted with the books of the Old and New Testaments; and in his writings are plain references to the Gospels of Matthew, Mark; John, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistle to the Galatians, and probable references to the other Epistles of St. Paul. About the year 303, Hierocles, a man of learning and a magistrate,

wrote against the Christians in two books. He was well acquainted with our Scriptures, and made many objections to them, thereby bearing testimony to their antiquity, and to the great respect which was shown them by the Christians; for he has referred both to the Gospels and to the Epistles. He mentions Peter and Paul by name, and did not deny the truth of our Savior's miracles; but, in order to overthrow the argument which the Christians built upon them, he set up the reputed

miracles of Apollonius Tyanseus to rival them. The Emperor Julian, who succeeded Constantius in the year 361, wrote also against the Christians, and in his work has undesignedly borne a valuable testimony to the history and books of the New Testament. He allows that Jesus was born in the reign of Augustus, at the time of a taxing made in Judea by Cyrenius. That the Christian religion had its rise, and began to be propagated, in the times of the Roman emperors Tiberius and Claudius. He

bears witness to the genuineness and authenticity of the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and the Acts of the Apostles. And he so quotes them as to intimate that these were the only historical books received by Christians, as of authority; and the only authentic memoirs of Jesus Christ, and his apostles, and the doctrines preached by them. He allows the early date of the Gospels, and even argues for them. He quotes, or plainly refers to the Acts of the Apostles, as already said; to St. Paul's

Epistles to the Romans, to the Corinthians, and to the Galatians. He does not deny the miracles of Jesus Christ, but allows him to have healed the blind, and the lame, and demoniacs, and to have rebuked the winds, and to have walked upon the waves of the sea. He endeavors, indeed, to diminish those works, but in vain. He endeavors also to lessen the number of the early believers in Jesus, but acknowledges, that there were multitudes of such men in Greece and Italy before St. John wrote his Gospel, He likewise affects

to diminish the quality of the early believers; and yet acknowledges, that beside men servants and maid servants, Cornelius, a Roman centurion at Cesarea, and Sergius Paulus, proconsul of Cyprus, were converted to the faith of Jesus before the end of the reign of Claudius. And he often speaks with great indignation of Peter and Paul, those two great apostles of Jesus, and successful preachers of his Gospel, so that, upon the whole, he has undesignedly borne witness to the truth

of many things recorded in the books of the New Testament. He aimed to overthrow the Christian religion, but has confirmed it. His arguments against it are perfectly harmless, and insufficient to unsettle the weakest Christian.

The quotations from Porphyry, Hierocles, and Julian, may be consulted in Lardner, who thus sums up his observations on their testimony:-

"They bear a fuller and more valuable testimony to the books of the New Testament, and to the facts

of the evangelical history, and to the affairs of Christians, than all our other witnesses beside. They proposed to overthrow the arguments for Christianity. They aimed to bring back to Gentilism those who had forsaken it, and to put a stop to the progress of Christianity, by the farther addition of new converts. But in those designs they had very little success in their own times; and their works, composed and published in the early days of Christianity, are now a testimony in our favor, and

will be of use in the defense of Christianity to the latest ages.

"One thing more which may be taken notice of, is this: that the remains of our ancient adversaries confirm the present prevailing sentiments of Christians, concerning those books of the New Testament which we call canonical, and are in the greatest authority with us. For their writings show, that those very books, and not any others now generally called apocryphal, are the books

which always were in the highest repute with Christians, and were then the rule of their faith, as they are now of ours."

To the same effect are the observations of Paley. These testimonies "prove that neither Celsus in the second, Porphyry in the third, nor Julian in the fourth century, suspected the authenticity of these books, or even insinuated that Christians were mistaken in the authors to whom they ascribed them. Not one of them expressed an opinion upon this

subject different from that which is holden by Christians. And when we consider how much it would have availed them to cast a doubt upon this point if they could, and how ready they showed themselves to take every advantage in their power, and that they were men of learning and inquiry, their concession, or rather their suffrage upon the subject, is extremely valuable."

That the facts and statements recorded in the evangelic history were not forgeries of a subsequent

period, is made also still more indubitable from the fact, that the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles are quoted or alluded to by a series of Christians, beginning with those who were contemporary with the apostles, or who immediately followed, and proceeding in close and regular succession from their time to the present. "The medium of proof stated in this proposition," observes Dr. Paley, "is of all others the most unquestionable, and is not diminished by the lapse of

ages. Bishop Burnet, in the History of his Own Times, inserts various extracts from Lord Clarendon's History. One such assertion is a proof that Lord Clarendon's History was extant when Bishop Burnet wrote, that it had been read and received by him as a work of Lord Clarendon's, and regarded by him as an authentic account of the transactions which it relates; and it will be a proof of these points a thousand years hence. The application of this argument to the Gospel history is obvious. If the

different books which are received by Christians as containing this history are quoted by a series of writers, as genuine in respect of their authors, and as authentic in respect to their narrative, up to the age in which the writers of them lived, then it is clear that these books must have had an existence previous to the earliest of those writings in which they are quoted, and that they were then admitted as authentic." "Their genuineness is made out, as well by the general arguments which evince

the genuineness of the most undisputed remains of antiquity, as also by peculiar and specific proofs, by citations from them in writings belonging to a period immediately contiguous to that in which they were published; by the distinguished regard paid by early Christians to the authority of these books; (which regard was manifested by their collecting of them into a volume, appropriating to that volume titles of peculiar respect, translating them into various languages,

disposing them into harmonies, writing commentaries upon them, and still more conspicuously by the reading of them in their public assemblies in all parts of the world;) by a universal agreement with respect to these books, while doubts were entertained concerning some others; by contending sects appealing to them; by many formal catalogues of these, as of certain and authoritative writings published in different and distant parts of the world; lastly, by the absence or

defect of the above-cited topics of evidence, when applied to any other histories of the same subject." (Paley's Evidences, cap. x.) All the parts of this argument may be seen clearly made out by passages quoted from the writers of the primitive ages of the Christian Church, in Dr. Lardner's "Credibility," Dr. Paley's "Evidences," and many other writers in defense of Christianity. It is exhibited in great force also in the first volume of Home's

"Introduction to the Study of the Scriptures."

Note A. - Page 110.

"THE documents which claim to have been thus handed down to posterity are the five books attributed to Moses himself, and usually denominated the Pentateuch. Now, the question before us is, whether they were, indeed, written synchronically with the Exodus, or whether they were composed in the name of Moses, at a much later period.

"That the Jews have acknowledged the authenticity of the Pentateuch, from the present day to the era of our Lord's nativity, a period of more than eighteen centuries, admits not of a possibility of a doubt, But this era is long posterior to that of Moses himself: it will be necessary, therefore, in order to established the point under discussion, to travel backward, step by step, so far as we can safely penetrate, according to the established rules of moral evidence.

"About two hundred and seventy-seven years before the Christian era, in the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus, king of Egypt, the Pentateuch, with the other books of the Old Testament, was translated into Greek, for the use of the Alexandrian Jews; and from the almost universal prevalence of that language, it henceforth became very widely disseminated, and was thus rendered accessible to the learned and inquisitive of every country.

"Now, that Greek translation which is still extant, and which is in the hands of almost every person, demonstrates that the Hebrew Pentateuch must have existed two hundred and seventy-seven years before Christ, because there is that correspondence between the two, which amply proves that the former must have been a version of the latter. But, if it certainly existed two hundred and seventy, seven years before Christ, it must have existed in the days of Ezra, at the time of

the return from Babylon, in the year before Christ five hundred and thirty-six; because there is no point between those two epochs, to which, with a shadow of probability, we can ascribe its composition. It existed, therefore, in the year five hundred and thirty-six, before the Christian era.

"Thus we have gained one retrogressive step: let us next see whether, with equal certainty, we can gain another.

"As it cannot be rationally denied, that the Pentateuch has been in existence ever

since the return of the Jews from Babylon, in the year five hundred and thirty-six, before the Christian era, some have thence been pleased to contend, that it was the work of Ezra; being a digested compilation of the indistinct and fabulous traditions of that people, which, like most nations of antiquity, they possessed in great abundance.

"To such an opinion, when thoroughly sifted, there are insuperable objections, however specious it may appear to a hasty observer.

"In the book of Ezra, the law of Moses, the man of God, is specifically referred to, as a well-known written document then actually existing; and, in the succeeding book of Nehemiah, we have an ample account of the mode in which that identical written document was openly read to the people, under the precise name of the Book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel. Nor is this all: it was not that Ezra produced a new volume, and called upon the Jews to receive it as the

authentic law of Moses; but the people themselves called upon Ezra to bring forth and read that book, as a work with which they had long been familiarly acquainted. The law of Moses, therefore, must have been well known to exist in writing previous to the return from Babylon; and as Ezra could not have produced under that name a mere compilation of oral traditions, so neither could he have suppressed the ancient volume of the law, nor have set forth instead of it, that volume which the Jews have ever since

received as the authentic Pentateuch. His own book affords proof positive, that some written law of Moses was known previously to have existed: and the call of the people, that it should be read to them, demonstrates that it could not long have perished; for if the work had been confessedly lost for many years, the people could not have called for that, which neither they nor their fathers had ever beheld, If, then, it were suppressed by Ezra, in favor of his own spurious composition, he must both have contrived

to make himself master of every extant copy of the genuine work, and he must have persuaded a whole people to receive as genuine, what almost every man among them must immediately have perceived to be spurious. For, if the genuine work were in existence down to the very time of Ezra, a point clearly involved in the demand of the people to have it read to them; and if the people had long been accustomed to hear it read to them, a point equally implied in their recorded demand upon Ezra, they

must all have been adequately acquainted with its contents; and the higher ranks among them must have repeatedly perused, and must therefore have known the whole of it, just as intimately as Ezra could do himself, But, what was thus universally familiar could be no more set aside by the fiat of an individual in favor of his own spurious composition, than the Pentateuch could now be set aside throughout Christendom, in favor of some newly produced volume which claimed to be the genuine law of

Moses. Add to this, that when the foundations of the second temple were laid, many persons were alive who well remembered the first. These consequently must have known whether there was or was not a written Law of Moses anterior to the captivity; nor could they be deceived by the production of any novel composition by Ezra.

"Such is the evidence afforded by the very books of Ezra and Nehemiah, to the existence of a written Law of Moses prior to the

return from Babylon, of a law familiarly known to the whole body of the people. But there is yet another evidence to the same purpose, analogous to that furnished by the Greek translation of the seventy.

"We have now extant two Hebrew copies of the Law of Moses: the one received by the Jews, the other acknowledged by the Samaritans: each maintaining that their own is the genuine record.

Now, if we examine these two copies, we shall find their coincidence

throughout to be such, that we cannot doubt a moment as to their original identity in every word, and in every sentence.

"We read, that after the king of Assyria had deported the ten tribes, and had colonized their territories with a mixed multitude from various parts of his dominions, the new settlers were infested by the incursions of wild beasts, This calamity, agreeably to the prevalent notion of local tutelary gods, they attributed to their not worshipping the

God of the land after his own prescribed manner.- To remedy the defect, therefore, one of the deported Levitical priests was sent to them, that he might teach them, as the Assyrian monarch expressed himself, the manner of the God of the land. The priest accordingly came among them, and dwelt in Bethel, and taught them how they should fear Jehovah; but while they duly received his instructions, they mixed the service of the true God with the service of their native idols. Hence, so far

as that particular was concerned, we are informed, that they neither did after their statutes, nor after their ordinances, nor after the law and commandment which Jehovah commanded the children of Jacob.

"Now, it is obvious, that the whole of this account supposes them to have a copy of the Pentateuch; for, if the priest were to instruct them in the law of the Lord, he would, of course, communicate to them a copy of that law; and though their ancient

superstitions led them to disregard its prohibitions, still it could not have been properly said of them, that they neither did after their statutes, nor after their ordinances, nor after the law and commandment which Jehovah commanded the children of Jacob, if all the while they were wholly unacquainted with those statutes and those ordinances, and with that law, and with that commandment, It is manifest, therefore, that they must at that time have received the copy of the Pentateuch, which they

always afterward religiously preserved. But this copy is the very same as that which the Jews and ourselves still receive. Consequently, as the Samaritans received it some years prior even to the Babylonic captivity of Judah, and as it is the very same code as that which some would fain attribute to Ezra, we may be sure, that that learned scribe could not possibly have been its author, but that he has handed down to us the genuine law of Moses, with the utmost good faith and integrity.

"Here we cannot but observe the providence of God in raising up so unobjectionable a testimony as that of the Samaritans. They and the Jews cordially hated each other, and they both possessed a copy of the Pentateuch. Hence, had there been any disposition to tamper with the text, they acted as a mutual check; and the result has been, that perhaps not a willful alteration can be shown, except the text relative to Gerizim and Ebal.

"The universal admission of the Pentateuch, as the inspired law of Moses, throughout the whole commonwealth of Israel, prior to its disruption into two hostile kingdoms, the magnificent temple of Solomon, and the whole ritual attached to it, plainly depends altogether upon the previously existing Pentateuch; and that code so strictly prohibits more than one practice of Solomon, that even to say nothing of the general objection from novelty, it is incredible either that he should have been its

author, or that it should have been written under his sanction and authority.

"As little can we, with any degree of probability, ascribe it to David. His life was occupied with almost incessant troubles and warfare; and it is difficult to conceive, how a book written by that prince could, in the space of a very few years, be universally received as the inspired composition of Moses, when no person had ever previously heard that Moses left any legislative code behind him.

"The Pentateuch might be more plausibly given to Samuel than to either of those two princes; but this supposition will not stand for a moment the test of rational inquiry. We shall still have the same difficulty to contend with as before: we shall still have to point out how it was possible that Samuel should persuade all Israel to adopt, as the inspired and authoritative law of Moses, a mere modern composition of his own, which no person had ever previously heard of.

"We have now ascended to within less than four centuries after the exodus from Egypt, and the alleged promulgation of the law from Mount Sinai; and from Ezra to Samuel, we have found no person to whom the composition of the Pentateuch can, with any show of reason or probability, be assigned, The only remaining question is, whether it can be thought to have been written during the three hundred and fifty-six years which elapsed between the entrance of the Israelites into Palestine, and the

appointment of Saul to be king of Israel.

"Now, the whole history which we have of that period utterly forbids such a supposition. The Israelites, though perpetually lapsing into idolatry, are uniformly described as acknowledging the authority of a written law of Moses; and this law, from generation to generation, is stated to be the directory by which the judges governed the people. Thus, Samuel expressly refers to a well-

known commandment of Jehovah, and to the Divine legation of Moses and Aaron, in a speech which he made to the assembled Israelites. Thus, the man of God, in his prophetic threat to Eli, similarly refers to the familiar circumstance recorded in the Pentateuch, that the house of his ancestor had been chosen to the pontificate out of all the tribes of Israel. Thus, when the nations are enumerated which were left to prove the people, it is said that they were left for this purpose, that it might be known whether

the Israelites would hearken unto the commandments of Jehovah, which he commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses. Thus, Joshua is declared to have written the book which bears his name, as a supplement to a prior book, which is denominated the look of the law of God. Thus, likewise, he specially asserts, that this book of the law of God is the book of the law of Moses; speaking familiarly of precepts, which are written in that book; represents

himself as reading its contents to all the assembled people, so that none of them could be ignorant of its purport; and mentions his writing a copy of it in the presence of the children of Israel. And thus, finally, we hear of the original, whence that copy is professed to have been taken, in the volume of the Pentateuch itself; for we are there told, that Moses with his own hand wrote the words of THIS law in a BOOK; and that he then commanded the Levites to take THIS BOOK of the law and put it in the side of the

ark of the covenant, that it might be there for a witness in all succeeding ages against the Israelites, in case they should violate its precepts."

(Abridged from FABER"S Horae Mosaicae.

Note B. - Page 119.

"In events so public and so signal, there was no room for mistake or deception. Of all the miracles recorded in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, there is not one of which the evidence is so multiplied as that of the descent of the

Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost; for it rests not on the testimony of those, whether many or few, who were all with one accord in one place. It is testified by all Jerusalem, and by the natives of regions far distant from Jerusalem; for there were then, says the historian, 'dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven; and when the inspiration of the disciples was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were all confounded, because that every man heard them

speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marveled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these who speak Galileans? and how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and the parts of Lybia about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them

speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.'

"It hath been objected by infidelity to the resurrection of Christ, that he ought to have appeared publicly, wherever he had appeared before his crucifixion: but here is a miracle displayed much farther than the resurrection of Christ could have been by his preaching openly, and working miracles for forty days in the temple and synagogues of Jerusalem, as he had done formerly; and this miracle is so connected

with the resurrection, that if the apostles speaking a variety of tongues be admitted, the resurrection of Jesus cannot be denied.- In reply to those (probably the natives of Jerusalem,) who, imagining that the apostles uttered gibberish, charged them with being full of new wine, St. Peter said, 'Ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words; for these men are not drunken as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day, Jesus of Nazareth, a man

approved of God among you by miracles, and signs, and wonders, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we are all witnesses. Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear.

"Thus, by the miraculous effusion of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, were the resurrection and ascension of Christ proved to a variety of nations of Asia, Africa, and Europe, all the quarters of the globe which were then known, as completely as if he had actually appeared among that mixed multitude in Jerusalem, reproved the high priest and council of the Jews for their unbelief and hardness of heart, and then ascended in their presence to heaven. They had such evidence as was incontrovertible, that St.

Peter and the other apostles were in inspired by the Spirit of God; they could not but know, as every Theist admits, that the Spirit of God never was, nor ever will be, shed abroad to enable any order of men to propagate falsehood with success; one of those who, by this inspiration, were speaking correctly a variety of tongues, assured them, that Jesus of Nazareth, whom they had slain, was raised from the dead, and exalted to the right hand of God; and that the same Jesus had, according to his

promise, shed abroad on the apostles that which they both saw and heard. The consequence of all this, we are told, was, that three thousand of his audience were instantly converted to the faith, and the same day incorporated into the Church by baptism.

"Would any in his senses have written a narrative of such events as these at the very time when they are said to have happened, and in any one of those countries, to the inhabitants of which he appeals as witnesses of

their truth, if he had not been aware that their truth could not be called in question? Would any forger of such a book as the Acts of the Apostles, at a period mm to that in which he relates that such astonishing events had happened, have needlessly appealed, for the truth of his narrative, to the people of all nations, and thus gone out of his way to furnish his readers with innumerable means of detecting his imposture? At no period, indeed, could forged books, such as the four Gospels and the Acts

of the Apostles, have been received as authentic, unless all the events which they record, whether natural or supernatural, had been believed, all the principal doctrines received, and all the rites of religion which they prescribe practiced, from the very period at which they represent the Son of God as sojourning on earth, laying the foundation of his Church, dying on a cross, rising from the dead, and ascending into heaven. The argument cannot, perhaps, be employed to prove the

authenticity of all the epistles which make so great a part of the New Testament; but it is certainly as applicable to some of them as it is to the Gospels, and the book called the Acts of the Apostles.

"The apostles, as Michaelis justly observes, (Introduction to the New Testament, chap, ii, sect.

1,) 'frequently allude, in their epistles, to the gift of miracles, which they had communicated to the Christian converts by the imposition of hands, in

confirmation of the doctrine delivered in their speeches and writings, and sometimes to miracles, which they themselves had performed,'

Now if these epistles are really genuine, the miracles referred to must certainly have been wrought, and the doctrines preached must have been Divine; for no man in his senses would have written to large communities, that he had not only performed miracles in their presence, in confirmation of the Divine origin of certain

doctrines, but that he had likewise communicated to them the same extraordinary endowments. Or if we can suppose any human being to have possessed sufficient effrontery to write in this manner to any community, it is obvious that, so far from gaining credit to his doctrine by such assertions, if not known to be true, he would have exposed himself to the utmost ridicule and contempt, and have ruined the cause which he attempted to support by such absurd conduct.

"St. Paul's first Epistle to the Thessalonians is addressed to a Christian Church, which he had lately founded, and to which he had preached the Gospel only three Sabbath days. A sudden persecution obliged him to quit this community before he had given to it its proper degree of consistence; and, what is of consequence in the present instance, he was protected neither by the power of the magistrate nor the favor of the vulgar. A pretended wonder-worker, who has once drawn the populace to his

party, may easily perform his exploits, and safely proclaim them. But this very populace, at the instigation of the Jews, had excited the insurrection, which obliged St.

Paul to quit the town. He sends therefore to the Thessalonians, who had received the Gospel, but whose faith, he apprehended, might waver through persecution, authorities, and proofs of his Divine mission, of which authorities the first and the chief are miracles and the gifts of the Holy

Ghost, 1 Thess. 1:5-10.* Is it possible, now, that St. Paul, without forfeiting all pretensions to common sense, could, when writing to a Church which he had lately established, have spoken of miracles performed, and gifts of the Holy Ghost communicated, if no member of that Church had seen the one, or received the other; nay, if many members had not witnessed both the performance and the effusions of the Holy Ghost? But it is equally impossible that the epistle, making this appeal to

miracles and spiritual gifts, could have been received as authentic, if forged in the name of St. Paul, at any future period, during the existence of a Christian Church at Thessalonica. In the two first chapters it represents its author and two of his companions as having been lately in that city, and appeals to the Church for the manner in which they had conducted themselves while there, and for the zeal and success with which they had preached the Gospel, and it concludes with these awful words; ' I adjure you

(horkizo humas) by the Lord, that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren;' i.e all the Christians of the community. Had St. Paul, and Timotheus, and Sylvanus, never been in Thessalonica, or had they conducted themselves in any respect differently from what they are said to have done in the two first chapters, these chapters would have convicted the author of this epistle of forgery, at whatever time it had made its first appearance. Had they been actually there, and

preached, and wrought miracles just as they are said to have done; and had some impostor, knowing this, forged the epistle before us at a considerable distance of time, the adjuration at the end of it must instantly have detected the forgery Every Thessalonian Christian of common sense would have said, 'How came we never to hear of this epistle before? Its author represents himself and two of his friends as having converted us to the faith a very short time before it was written and sent to us,

and he charges those to whom it was immediately sent in the most solemn manner possible, that they should cause it to be read to every one of us; no Christian in Thessalonica would, in a matter of this kind, have dared to disobey the authority of an apostle, especially when enforced by so awful an adjuration; and yet neither we nor our fathers ever heard of this epistle, till now that Paul, and Sylvanus, and Timotheus are all dead, and therefore incapable of either confirming or refuting its authenticity!'

Such an epistle, if not genuine, could never have been received by any community.

*See Hardy's Greek Testament; Whitby on the Place, with Schleusner and Parkhurst's Lexicons on the word dunamis.

"The same apostle, in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, corrects the abuse of certain spiritual gifts, particularly that of speaking divers kinds of tongues, and prescribes rules for the employment of these supernatural talents; he enters into a

particular detail of them, as they existed in the Corinthian Church; reasons on their respective worth and excellence; says that they were limited in their duration, that they were no distinguishing mark of Divine favor, nor of so great importance as faith and virtue, the love of God, and charity to our neighbors. Now, if this epistle was really written by St. Paul to the Corinthians, and they had actually received no spiritual gifts, no power, imparted by extraordinary means, of speaking foreign

languages, the proper place to be assigned him were not among impostors, but among those who had lost their understanding. A juggler may deceive by the dexterity of his hands, and persuade the ignorant and the credulous that more than human means are requisite for the performance of his extraordinary feats; but he will hardly persuade those whose understandings remain unimpaired, that he has likewise communicated to his spectators the power of working miracles, and of speaking languages which

they had never learned, were they conscious of their inability to perform the one, or to speak the other. If the epistle, therefore, was written during the life of St.

Paul, and received by the Corinthian Church, it is impossible to doubt but that St. Paul was its author, and that among the Corinthians were prevalent those spiritual gifts of which he labors to correct the abuse. If those gifts were never prevalent among the Corinthian Christians, and this epistle

was not seen by them until the next age, it could not have been received by the Corinthian Church as the genuine writing of the apostle, because the members of that Church must have been aware that if those gifts, of which it speaks, had been really possessed, and so generally displayed by their fathers, as it represents them to have been, some of themselves would surely have heard their fathers mention them; and as the epistle treats of some of the most important subjects that ever occupied the

mind of man, the introduction of death into the world through Adam, and the resurrection of the dead through Christ, they must have inferred that their fathers would not have secreted from them their children a treatise on topics so interesting to the whole human race." (Gleig's Edition of Stackhouse's History of the Bible, vol. iii. Intro. p. 11, &c.)

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13 THE UNCORRUPTED PRESERVATION OF THE BOOKS OF SCRIPTURE

The historical evidence of the antiquity and genuineness of the books ascribed to Moses, and those which contain the history of Christ and the establishment of his religion, being thus complete, the integrity of the copies at present received is the point next in question.

With respect to the Scriptures of the Old

Testament; the list of Josephus, the Septuagint translation, and the Samaritan Pentateuch, are sufficient proofs that the books which are received by us as sacred, are the same as those received by the Jews and Samaritans long before the Christian era. For the New Testament; beside the quotations from almost all the books now included in that volume and references to them by name in the earliest Christian writers, catalogues of authentic Scriptures were published

at very early periods, which, says Dr. Paley,

"though numerous, and made in countries at a wide distance from one another, differ very little, differ in nothing material, and all contain the four Gospels,

"In the writings of Origen which remain, and in some extracts preserved by Eusebius, from works of his which are now lost, there are enumerations of the books of Scripture, in which the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles are distinctly and honorably specified, and in which no

books appear beside what are now received. (Lard. Cred. vol. iii, p. 234, et seq., vol. viii, p. 196.) The date of Origen's works is A. D. 230.

"Athanasius, about a century afterward, delivered a catalogue of the books of the New Testament in form, containing our Scriptures and no others; of which he says, ' In these alone the doctrine of religion is taught; let no man add to them, or take anything from them.' (Lard Cred. vol. viii, p. 223.)

"About twenty years after Athanasius, Cyril, bishop of Jerusalem, set forth a catalogue of the books of Scripture publicly read at that time in the Church of Jerusalem, exactly the same as ours, except that the 'Revelation' is omitted. (Lard Cred. vol. viii, p. 270.)

"And, fifteen years after Cyril, the council of Laodicea delivered an authoritative catalogue of canonical Scripture, like Cyril's, the same as ours, with the omission of the 'Revelation.'

"Catalogues now become frequent. Within thirty years after the last date, that is, from the year 363 to near the conclusion of the fourth century, we have catalogues by Epiphanius, (Lard. Cred. vol. viii, p. 368,) by Gregory Nazianzen, (Lard. Cred. vol. ix, p. 132,) by Philaster, bishop of Brescia in Italy, (Lard. Cred. vol. ix, p. 373,) by Amphilochius, bishop of Iconium, all, as they are sometimes called, clean catalogues, (that is, they admit no books into the number beside what we now receive,) and all, for

every purpose of historic evidence, the same as ours. (3) (3) Epiphanius omits the Acts of the Apostles. This must have been an accidental mistake, either in him or in some copyist of his work; for he elsewhere expressly refers to this book, and ascribes it to Luke.

"Within the same period, Jerome, the most learned Christian writer of his age, delivered a catalogue of the books of the New Testament, recognizing every book now received, with the intimation of a

doubt concerning the Epistle to the Hebrews alone, and taking not the least notice of any book which is not now received. (Lard. Cred, vol. x, p. 77.)

"Contemporary with Jerome, who lived in Palestine, was Saint Augustine, in Africa, who published likewise a catalogue, without joining to the Scriptures, as books of authority, any other ecclesiastical writing whatever, and without omitting one which we at this day acknowledge.

(Lard. Cred. vol. x, p. 213.)

"And with these concurs another contemporary writer, Rufen, presbyter of Aquileia, whose catalogue, like theirs, is perfect and unmixed, and concludes with these remarkable words:

'These are the volumes which the fathers have included in the canon, and out of which they would have us prove the doctrine of our faith.'" (Lard, Cred. vol. x, page 187.) This, it is true, only proves that the books are substantially the same; but the evidence is abundant, that they have

descended to us without any material alteration whatever.

"1. Before that event, [the time of Christ,] the regard which was paid to them by the Jews, especially to the law, would render any forgery or material change in their contents impossible.

The law having been the deed by which the land of Canaan was divided among the Israelites, it is improbable that this people who possessed that land, would suffer it to be altered or falsified.

The distinction of the twelve tribes, and their separate interests, made it more difficult to alter their law than that of other nations less jealous than the Jews. Farther, at certain stated seasons, the law was publicly read before all the people of Israel, Deut. 31:9-13; Joshua 8:34, 35; Neh. 8:1-5; and it was appointed to be kept in the ark, for a constant memorial against those who transgressed it, Deut. 31:26. Their king was required to write him a copy of this law in a book, out of that which is before

the priests, the Levites, and to read therein all the days of his life, Deut. 17:18, 19; their priests also were commanded to teach the children of Israel all the statutes, which the Lord had spoken to them by the hand of Moses, Levit. 10:11; and parents were charged not only to make it familiar to themselves, but also to teach it diligently to their children, Deut. 17:18,19; beside which, a severe prohibition was annexed, either making any addition to, or diminution from the law, Deut. 4:2; 12:32. Now such precepts as these

could not have been given by an impostor who was adding to it, and who would wish men to forget rather than enjoin them to remember it: for, as all the people were obliged to know and observe the law under severe penalties, they were, in a manner, the trustees and guardians of the law, as well as the priests and Levites. The people, who were to teach their children, must have had copies of it; the priests and Levites must have had copies of it; and the magistrates must have had copies of it, as being the

law of the land. Farther, after the people were divided into two kingdoms, both the people of Israel and those of Judah still retained the same book of the law: and the rivalry or enmity that subsisted between the two kingdoms, prevented either of them from altering or adding to the law. After the Israelites were carried captive into Assyria, other nations were placed in the cities of Samaria in their stead; and the Samaritans received the Pentateuch, either from the priest who was sent by order of the king of Assyria,

to instruct them in the manner of the God of the land, 2 Kings 17:26, or several years afterward from the hands of Manasseh, the son of Joiada the high priest, who was expelled from Jerusalem by Nehemiah, for marrying the daughter of Sanballat, the governor of Samaria; and who was constituted, by Sanballat, the first high priest of the temple at Samaria, (Neh. 8:28; Josephus Ant. Jud. lib. xi, c. 8; Bishop Newton's Works, vol. i, p. 23.) Now, by one or both of these means, the

Samaritans had the Pentateuch as well as the Jews; but with this difference, that the Samaritan Pentateuch was in the old Hebrew or Phenician characters, in which it remains to this day; whereas the Jewish copy was changed into Chaldee characters, (in which it also remains to this day,) which were fairer and clearer than the Hebrew, the Jews having learned the Chaldee language during their seventy years abode in Babylon. The jealousy and hatred which subsisted

between the Jews and Samaritans, made it impracticable for either nation to corrupt or alter the text in anything of consequence without certain discovery; and the general agreement between the Hebrew and Samaritan copies of the Pentateuch, which are now extant, is such, as plainly demonstrates that the copies were originally the same. Nor can any better evidence be desired, that the Jewish Bibles have not been corrupted or interpolated, than this very book of the Samaritans;

which, after more than two thousand years discord between the two nations, varies as little from the other as any classic author in less tract of time has disagreed from itself by the unavoidable slips and mistakes of so many transcribers. (4)

(4) Dr. BENTLEY'S Remarks on Freethinking, part i, remark 27, (vol. v, p. 144, of Bp. RANDOLPH'S Enchiridion Theologicum, 8vo. Oxford, 1792.)

"After the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, the books of the

law and the prophets were publicly read in their synagogues every Sabbath day, Acts 13:14,15, 27; Luke 4:17-20; which was an excellent method of securing their purity, as well as of enforcing the observation of the law. The Chaldee paraphrases and the translation of the Old Testament into Greek, which were afterward made, were so many additional securities. To these facts we may add, that the reverence of the Jews for their sacred writings is another guarantee for their

integrity: so great, indeed, was that reverence, that, according to the statements of Philo and Josephus, (Philo, apud Eusel. de Prcep, Evang. lib. viii, c. 2; Josephus contra Apim, lib. i, sec. 8,) they would suffer any torments, and even death itself, rather than change a single point or iota of the Scriptures. A law was also enacted by them, which denounced him to be guilty of inexpiable sin, who should presume to make the slightest possible alteration in their sacred books. The Jewish doctors, fearing to add anything to

the law, passed their own notions as traditions or explanations of it; and both Jesus Christ and his apostles accused the Jews of entertaining a prejudiced regard for those traditions, but they never charged them with falsifying or corrupting the Scriptures themselves.

"2. After the birth of Christ, for, since that event, the Old Testament has been held in high esteem both by Jews and Christians. The Jews also frequently suffered martyrdom for their Scriptures, which they

would not have done, had they suspected them to have been corrupted or altered.

Beside, the Jews and Christians were a mutual guard upon each other, which must have rendered any material corruption impossible, if it had been attempted: for if such an attempt had been made by the Jews, they would have been detected by the Christians. The accomplishment of such a design, indeed, would have been impracticable from the moral impossibility of

the Jews (who were dispersed in every country of the then known world) being able to collect all the then existing copies, with the intention of corrupting or falsifying them. On the other hand, if any such attempt had been made by the Christians, it would assuredly have been detected by the Jews: nor could any such attempt have been made by any other man or body of men, without exposure both by Jews and Christians. To these considerations, it may be added, that the admirable agreement of all

the ancient paraphrases and versions, and the writings of Josephus, with the Old Testament as it is now extant, together with the quotations which are made from it in the New Testament, and in the writings of all ages to the present time, forbid us to indulge any suspicion of any material corruption in the books of the Old Testament; and give us every possible evidence of which a subject of this kind is capable, that these books are now in our hands genuine and unadulterated.

"3. Lastly, the agreement of all the manuscripts of the Old Testament, (amounting to nearly eleven hundred and fifty,) which are known to be extant, is a clear proof of its uncorrupted preservation. These manuscripts, indeed, are not all entire; some contain one part, and some another. But it is absolutely impossible that every manuscript, whether in the original Hebrew, or in any ancient version or paraphrase, should or could be designedly altered or falsified in the same passages, without detection

either by Jews or Christians. The manuscripts now extant are, confessedly, liable to errors and mistakes from the carelessness, negligence, or inaccuracy of copyists; but they are not all uniformly incorrect throughout, nor in the same words or passages; but what is incorrect in one place is correct in another. Although the various readings, which have been discovered by learned men, who have applied themselves to the collection of every known manuscript of the Hebrew Scriptures,

amount to many thousands, yet these differences are of so little real moment, that their laborious collations afford us scarcely any opportunities of correcting the sacred text in important passages. So far, however, are these extensive and profound researches from being either trivial or nugatory, that we have in fact derived from them the greatest advantage which could have been wished for by any real friend of revealed religion; namely, the certain knowledge of the

agreement of the copies of the ancient Scriptures, now extant in their original language, with each other, and with our Bibles. (Bishop TOMLINE'S Elements of Christ, Theol vol i, p. 31.)

"Equally satisfactory is the evidence for the integrity and uncorruptness of the New Testament in anything material. The testimonies, adduced in the preceding section in behalf of the genuineness and authenticity of the New Testament, are, in a great measure, applicable to

show that it has been transmitted to us entire and uncorrupted. But, to be more particular, we remark, that the uncorrupted preservation of the books of the New Testament is manifest,

"1. From their contents; for, so early as the two first centuries of the Christian era, we find the very same facts, and the very same doctrines universally received by Christians, which we of the present day believe on the credit of the New Testament.

"2. Because a universal corruption of those writings was impossible, nor can the least vestige of such a corruption be found in history, They could not be corrupted during the life of their authors; and before their death, copies were dispersed among the different communities of Christians, who were scattered throughout the then known world. Within twenty years after the ascension, Churches were formed in the principal cities of the Roman Empire; and in all these Churches the books of the

New Testament, especially the four Gospels, were read as a part of their public worship, just as the writings of Moses and the prophets were read in the Jewish synagogues. (5) Nor would the use of them be confined to public worship; for these books were not, like the Sybilline oracles, locked up from the perusal of the public, but were exposed to public investigation. When the books of the New Testament were first published to the world, the Christians would naturally entertain the highest

esteem and reverence for writings that delivered an authentic and inspired history of the life and doctrines of Jesus Christ, and would be desirous of possessing such an invaluable treasure. Hence, as we learn from unquestionable authority, copies were multiplied and disseminated as rapidly as the boundaries of the Church increased; and translations were made into as many languages as were spoken by its professors, Some of which remain to this day; so that it would very soon be

rendered absolutely impossible to corrupt these books in any one important word or phrase. Now, it is not to be supposed, (without violating all probability,) that all Christians should agree in a design of changing or corrupting the original books; and if some only should make the attempt, the uncorrupted copies would still remain to detect them. And supposing there was some error in one translation or copy, or something changed, added, or taken away; yet there were many other copies

and other translations, by the help of which the neglect or fraud might be or would be corrected.

"Farther, as these books could not be corrupted during the life of their respective authors, and while a great number of witnesses were alive to attest the facts which they record: so neither could any material alteration take place after their decease, without being detected while the original manuscripts were preserved in the Churches. The Christians who were

instructed by the apostles or by their immediate successors, traveled into all parts of the world, carrying with them copies of their writings; from which other copies were multiplied and preserved. Now, as we have already seen, we have an unbroken series of testimonies for the genuineness and authenticity of the New Testament, which can be traced backward, from the fourth century of the Christian era to the very time of the apostles: and these very testimonies are equally applicable to prove

its uncorrupted preservation. Moreover, harmonies of the four Gospels were anciently constructed; commentaries were written upon them, as well as upon the other books of the New Testament, (many of which are still extant,) manuscripts were collated, and editions of the New Testament were put forth. These sacred records, being universally regarded as the supreme standard of truth, were received by every class of Christians with peculiar respect, as being Divine compositions, and

possessing an authority belonging to no other books. Whatever controversies, therefore, arose among different sects, (and the Church was very early rent with fierce contentions on doctrinal points,) the Scriptures of the New Testament were received and appealed to by every one of them, as being conclusive in all matters of controversy: consequently it was morally impossible, that any man or body of men should corrupt or falsify them in any fundamental article, should foist into

them a single expression to favor their peculiar tenets, or erase a single sentence, without being detected by thousands.

(5) Dr. LARDNER has collected numerous instances in the second part of his Credibility of the Gospel History; references to which may be seen in the general, index to his works, article Scriptures. See particularly the testimonies of Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Origen, and Augustine.

"If any material alteration had been attempted by the

orthodox, it would have been detected by the heretics; and, on the other hand, if a heretic had inserted, altered, or falsified anything, he would have been exposed by the orthodox, or by other heretics, It is well known that a division commenced in the fourth century, between the eastern and western Churches, which, about the middle of the ninth century, became irreconcilable, and subsists to the present day. Now, it would have been impossible to alter all the copies in the eastern

empire; and if it had been possible in the east, the copies in the west would have detected the alteration. But, in fact, both the eastern and western copies agree, which could not be expected if either of them was altered or falsified. The uncorrupted preservation of the New Testament is farther evident,

"3. From the agreement of all the manuscripts. The manuscripts of the New Testament, which are extant, are far more numerous than those of

any single classic author whomsoever; upward of three hundred and fifty were collected by Griesbach, for his celebrated critical edition. These manuscripts, it is true, are not all entire: most of them contain only the Gospels; others, the Gospels, Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles; and a few contain the Apocalypse or Revelation of John. But they were all written in very different and distant parts of the world; several of them are upward of twelve hundred years old, and give us the

books of the New Testament, in all essential points, perfectly accordant with each other, as any person may readily ascertain by examining the critical editions published by Mill, Kuster, Bengel, Wetstein, and Griesbach. The thirty thousand various readings which are said to be found in the manuscripts collated by Dr. Mill, and the hundred and fifty thousand which Griesbach's edition is said to contain, in no degree whatever affect the general credit and integrity of the text. In fact, the more

copies are multiplied, and the more numerous the transcripts and translations from the original, the more likely is it, that the genuine text and the true original reading will be investigated and ascertained. The most correct and accurate ancient classics now extant are those of which we have the greatest number of manuscripts; and the most depraved, mutilated, and inaccurate editions of the old writers are those of which we have the fewest manuscripts, and perhaps only a single manuscript extant. Such are Athenseus,

Clemens Romanus, Hesychius, and Photius. But of this formidable mass of various readings, which have been collected by the diligence of collators, not one tenth, - nay, not one hundredth part, either makes or can make any perceptible, or at least any material, alteration in the sense in any modern version. They consist almost wholly of palpable errors in transcription, grammatical and verbal differences, such as the insertion or omission of an article, the substitution of a word for its equivalent, and

the transposition of a word or two in a sentence. Even the few that do change the sense, affect it only in passages relating to unimportant, historical, and geographical circumstances, or other collateral matters; and the still smaller number that make any alteration in things of consequence, do not on that account place us in any absolute uncertainty. For, either the true reading may be discovered by collating the other manuscripts, versions, and quotations found in the works of the

ancients; or, should these fail to give us the requisite information, we are enabled to explain the doctrine in question from other undisputed passages of holy writ.

"4. The last testimony to be adduced for the integrity and uncorruptness of the New Testament, is furnished by the agreement of the ancient versions and quotations from it, which are made in the writings of the Christians of the first three centuries, and in those of the succeeding fathers of the Church,

"The testimony of versions, and the evidence of the ecclesiastical fathers, have already been noticed as a proof of the genuineness and authenticity of the New Testament. The quotations from the New Testament in the writings of the fathers are so numerous, that (as it has frequently been observed) the whole body of the Gospels and Epistles might be compiled from the various passages dispersed in their commentaries and other writings. And though these citations were, in many instances, made from

memory, yet, being always made with due attention to the sense and meaning, and most commonly with a regard to the words as well as to the order of the words, they correspond with the original records from which-they were extracted:- an irrefragable argument this, of the purity and integrity with which the New Testament has been preserved."

(HORNE'S Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, vol. i, chap. 2, sect. 3.)

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14 THE CREDIBILITY OF THE TESTIMONY OF THE SACRED WRITERS

The proofs of the existence and actions of Moses and Christ, the founders of the Jewish and Christian religions, having been adduced, with those of the antiquity and uncorrupted preservation of the records which profess to contain the facts of their history, and the doctrines they taught, the only question to

be determined before we examine those miracles and prophecies on which the claim of the Divine authority of their mission rests, is, whether these records faithfully record the transactions of which they give us information, and on which the Divinity of both systems, the Jewish and the Christian, is built. To deny this because we object to the doctrines taught, is equally illogical and perverse, as it is assuming the doctrine to be false before we have considered all the evidence which may be adduced in

its favor; to deny it because we have already determined to reject the miracles, is equally absurd and impious. It has already been proved, that miracles are possible; and whether the transactions related as such in the Scriptures be really miraculous or not, is a subsequent inquiry to that which respects the faithful recording of them. If the evidence of this is insufficient, the examination of the miracles is unnecessary; if it is strong and convincing, that examination is a

subject of very serious import.

We might safely rest the faithfulness of the Scriptural record upon the argument of Leslie, before adduced; but, from the superabundance of evidence which the case furnishes, some amplifications may be added, which we shall confine principally to the authors of the New Testament.

There are four circumstances which never fail to give credibility to a witness, whether he depose

to anything orally or in writing:-

1. That he is a person of virtuous and sober character.

2. That he was in circumstances certainly to know the truth of what he relates.

3. That he has no interest in making good the story,

4. That his account is circumstantial.

In the highest degree these guarantees of faithful and exact testimony meet in the evangelists and apostles.

That they were persons of strict and exemplary virtue, must by all candid persons be acknowledged; so much so, that nothing to the contrary was ever urged against the integrity of their conduct by the most malicious enemies of Christianity. Avarice and interest could not sway them, for they voluntarily abandoned all their temporal connections, and embarked in a cause which the world regarded, to the last degree, as wretched and deplorable. Of their sincerity they gave the utmost proof in the

openness of their testimony, never affecting reserve, or shunning inquiry. They delivered their testimony before kings and princes, priests and magistrates, in Jerusalem and Judea, where their Master lived and died, and in the most populous, inquisitive, and learned parts of the world, submitting its evidences to a fair and impartial examination.

"Their minds were so penetrated with a conviction of the truth of the Gospel, that they

esteemed it their distinguished honor and privilege to seal their attestation to it by their sufferings, and blessed God that they were accounted worthy to suffer reproach and shame for their profession.

Passing through honor and dishonor, through evil report and good report, as deceivers and yet true. Never dejected, never intimidated by any sorrows and sufferings they supported; but when stoned, imprisoned, and persecuted in one city,

flying to another, and there preaching the Gospel with intrepid boldness and heaven-inspired zeal. Patient in tribulation, fervent in spirit, rejoicing under persecution, calm and composed under calumny and reproach, praying for their enemies, when in dungeons cheering the silent hours of night with hymns of praise to God. Meeting death itself in the most dreadful forms with which persecuting rage could dress it, with a serenity and exultation the Stoic philosophy never knew. In all these public

scenes showing to the world a heart infinitely above what men vulgarly style great and happy, infinitely remote from ambition, the lust of gold, and a passion for popular applause, working with their own hands to raise a scanty subsistence for themselves that they might not be burdensome to the societies they had formed, holding up to all with whom they conversed, in the bright faithful mirror of their own behavior, the amiableness and excellency of the religion they taught, and in every scene and

circumstance of life distinguished for their devotion to God, their unconquered love for mankind, their sacred regard for truth, their self-government, moderation, humanity, sincerity, and every Divine, social, and moral virtue that can adorn and exalt a character. Nor are there any features of enthusiasm in the writings they have left us. We meet with no frantic fervors indulged, no monkish abstraction from the world recommended, no maceration of the body countenanced, no

unnatural institutions established, no vain flights of fancy cherished, no absurd and irrational doctrines taught, no disobedience to any forms of human government encouraged, but all civil establishments and social connections suffered to remain in the same state they were before Christianity. So far were the apostles from being enthusiasts, and instigated by a wild undiscerning religious frenzy to rush into the jaws of death, when they might have honorably and lawfully escaped it,

that we find them, when they could, without wounding their consciences, legally extricate themselves from persecution and death, pleading their privileges as Roman citizens, and appealing to Cesar's supreme jurisdiction." (HARWOOD'S Introduction to the New Testament.)

As it was contrary to their character to attempt to deceive others, so they could not be deceived themselves. They could not mistake in the case of

feeding of the five thousand, and the sudden healing of lepers, and lame and blind persons; they could not but know, whether he with whom they conversed for forty days was the same Jesus, as he with whom they had daily and familiar intercourse long before his crucifixion. They could not mistake as to his ascension into heaven; as to the fact whether they themselves were suddenly endowed with the power of speaking in languages which they had never acquired; and whether they were able to

work miracles, and to impart the same power to others.

They were not only disinterested in their testimony; but their interests were on the side of concealment. One of the evangelists, Matthew, occupied a lucrative situation when called by Jesus, and was evidently an opulent man; the fishermen of Galilee were at least in circumstances of comfort, and never had any worldly inducement held out to them by their Master; Nicodemus was a

ruler among the Jews; Joseph of Arimathea "a rich man;" and St. Paul, both from his education, connections, and talents, had encouraging prospects in life: but of himself, and of his fellow laborers, he speaks, and describes all the earthly rewards they obtained for testifying both to Jews and Greeks that Jesus was the Christ, - "Even unto this present hour we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place; we are made as the filth of the world, and are the off

scouring of all things unto this day." Finally, they sealed their testimony in many instances with their blood, a circumstance of which they had been forewarned by their Master, and in the daily expectation of which they lived. From this the conclusion of Dr. Paley is irresistible, "These men could not be deceivers. By only not bearing testimony they might have avoided all their sufferings, and have lived quietly. Would men in such circumstances pretend to have seen what they never saw; assert facts

of which they had no knowledge; go about lying, to teach virtue; and though not only convinced of Christ's being an impostor, but having seen the success of his imposture in his crucifixion, yet persist in carrying it on, and so persist as to bring upon themselves, for nothing and with a full knowledge of the consequence, enmity and hatred, danger and death?"

To complete the character of their testimony, it is in the highest degree circumstantial. We never

find that forged or false accounts of things abound in particularities; and where many particulars are related of time, place, persons, &c, there is always a strong presumption of truth, and on the contrary. Here the evidence is more than presumptive. The history of the evangelists and of the Acts of the Apostles is so fill of reference to persons then living, and often persons of consequence, to places in which miracles and other transactions took place publicly and not in secret; and the application of all

these facts by the first propagators of the Christian religion to give credit to its Divine authority was so frequent and explicit, and often so reproving to their opposes, that if they had not been true they must have been contradicted and if contradicted on good evidence, the authors must have been overwhelmed with confusion. This argument is rendered the stronger when it is considered that "these things were not done in a corner," nor was the age dark and illiterate and

prone to admit fables. The Augustan age was the most learned the world ever saw. The love of arts, sciences, and literature, was the universal passion in almost every part of the Roman empire, where Christianity was first taught in its doctrines, and proclaimed in its facts; and in this inquisitive and discerning era, it rose, flourished, and established itself, with much resistance to its doctrines, but without being once questioned as to the truth of its historical facts.

Yet how easily might they have been disproved had they been false- that Herod the Great was not the sovereign of Judea when our Lord was born-that wise men from the east did not come to be informed of the place of his birth-and that Herod did not convene the Sanhedrim, to inquire where their expected Messiah was to be born-that the infants in Bethlehem were not massacred-that in the time of Augustus all Judea was not enrolled by an imperial edict-that Simeon did not take the infant in his arms

and proclaim him to be the expected salvation of Israel, which is stated to have been done publicly in the temple, before all the people-that the numerous persons, many of whose names are mentioned, and some the relatives of rulers and centurions, were not miraculously healed nor raised from the dead-that the resurrection of Lazarus, stated to have been done publicly, near to Jerusalem, and himself a respectable person, well known, did not occur-that the circumstances of the trial, condemnation, and

crucifixion of Christ, did not take place as stated by his disciples; in particular, that Pilate did not wash his hands before them and give his testimony to the character of our Lord; that there was no preternatural darkness from twelve to three in the afternoon on the day of the crucifixion; and that there was no earth-quake; facts which if they did not occur could have been contradicted by thousands: finally, that these well-known unlettered men, the apostles, were not heard to speak with tongues by

many who were present in the assembly in which this was said to take place. But we might select almost all the circumstances out of the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, and show, that for the most part they were capable of being contradicted at the time when they were first published, and that the immense number of circumstances mentioned would in aftertimes have furnished acute investigators of the history with the means of detecting its falsehood had it not been indubitable, either by

comparing the different relations with each other, or with some well authenticated facts of accredited collateral history. On the contrary, the small variations in the story of the evangelists are confirmations of their testimony, being in proof that there was no concert among them to impose upon the world, and they do not affect in the least the facts of the history itself; while as far as collateral, or immediately subsequent history has given its evidence, we have already seen, that it is

confirmatory of the exactness and accuracy of the sacred penmen.

For all these reasons, the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are to be taken as a faithful and uncorrupted record of the transactions they exhibit; and nothing now appears to be necessary, but that this record be examined in order to determine its claims to be admitted as the deposit of the standing revelations of the will of God to mankind. The evidence of the genuineness and

authenticity of the books of which it is composed, at least such of them as is necessary to the argument, is full and complete; and if certain of the facts which they detail are proved to be really miraculous, and the prophecies they record are in the proper sense predictive, then, according to the principles before established, the conclusion must be, THAT THE

DOCTRINES WHICH THEY ATTEST ARE DIVINE. This shall be the next subject examined; minor objections being

postponed to be answered in a subsequent chapter.

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15 THE MIRACLES OF SCRIPTURE

It has been already proved that miracles are possible, that they are appropriate, necessary, and satisfactory evidences of a revelation from God: and that, like other facts, they are capable of being authenticated by credible testimony. These points having been established, the main questions before

us are, whether the facts alleged as miraculous in the Old and New Testaments have a sufficient claim to that character, and whether they were wrought in confirmation of the doctrine and mission of the founders of the Jewish and Christian religions.

That definition of a true miracle which we have adopted, may here be conveniently repeated:-

A miracle is an effect or event contrary to the established constitution or course of things, or a

sensible suspension or controlment of, or deviation from, the known laws of nature, wrought either by the immediate act, or by the concurrence, or by the permission of God, for the proof or evidence of some particular doctrine, or in attestation of the authority of some particular person.

The force of the argument from miracles lies in this- that as such works are manifestly above human power, and as no created being can effect them, unless empowered by the

Author of nature, when they are wrought for such an end as that mentioned in the definition, they are to be considered as authentications of a Divine mission by a special and sensible interposition of God himself.

To adduce all the extraordinary works wrought by Moses and by Christ would be unnecessary.

In those we select for examination, the miraculous character will sufficiently appear to bring them within our definition;

and it will be recollected that it has been already established that the books which contain the account of these facts must have been written by their reputed authors, and that had not the facts themselves occurred as there related, it is impossible that the people of the age in which the accounts of them were published could have been brought to believe them.

On the basis then of the arguments already adduced to prove these great points, it is concluded that we have

in the Scriptures a true relation of the facts themselves. Nothing therefore remains but to establish their claims as miracles.

Out of the numerous miracles wrought by the agency of Moses we select, in addition to those before mentioned in chapter 9, the plague of DARKNESS. Two circumstances are to be noted in the relation given of this event, Exodus 10. It continued three days, and it afflicted the Egyptians only, for "all the children of Israel had light

in their dwellings." The fact here mentioned was of the most public kind: and had it not taken place, every Egyptian and every Israelite could have contradicted the account. The phenomenon was not produced by an eclipse of the sun, for no eclipse of that luminary can endure so long. Some of the Roman writers mention a darkness by day so great that persons were unable to know each other; but we have no historical account of any other darkness so long continued as this, and so intense, that the

Egyptians "rose not up from their places for three days" But if any such circumstance had again occurred, and a natural cause could have been assigned for it, yet even then the miraculous character of this event would remain unshaken; for to what but to a supernatural cause could the distinction made between the Israelites and the Egyptians be attributed, when they inhabited a portion of the same country, and when their neighborhoods were immediately adjoining?

Here then are the characters of a true miracle. The established course of natural causes and effects is interrupted by an operation upon that mighty element, the atmosphere. That it was not a chance irregularity in nature, is made apparent from the effect following the volition of a man acting in the name of the Lord of nature, and from its being restrained by that to a certain part of the same country - "Moses stretched out his hand," and the darkness prevailed, everywhere but in the

dwellings of his own people. The fact has been established by former arguments; and the fact being allowed, the miracle of necessity follows.

The destruction of the FIRST BORN of the Egyptians may be next considered. Here too are several circumstances to be carefully noted. This judgment was threatened in the presence of Pharaoh, before any of the other plagues were brought upon him and his people. The Israelites also were forewarned of it. They were

directed to slay a lamb, sprinkle the blood upon their door posts, and prepare for their departure that same night. The stroke was inflicted upon the first born of the Egyptians only, and not upon any other part of the family-it occurred in the same hour-the first born of the Israelites escaped without exception-and the festival of "the Passover" was from that night instituted in remembrance of the event. Such a festival could not in the nature of the thing be established in any subsequent age, in

commemoration of an event which never occurred; and if instituted at the time, the event must have taken place, for by no means could this large body of men have been persuaded that their first born had been saved and those of the Egyptians destroyed, if the facts had not been before their eyes. The history therefore being established, the miracle follows; for the order of nature is sufficiently known to warrant the conclusion, that, if a pestilence were to be assumed as the agent of

this calamity, an epidemic disease, however rapid and destructive, comes not upon the threat of a mortal, and makes no such selection as the first born of every family.

The miracle of dividing the waters of the RED SEA has already been mentioned, but merits more particular consideration. In this event we observe, as in the others, circumstances which exclude all possibility of mistake or collusion. The subject of the miracle is the sea; the witnesses of it the host of

Israel, who passed through on foot, and the Egyptian nation, who lost their king and his whole army. The miraculous characters of the event are:- The waters are divided, and stand up on each side;- the instrument is a strong east wind, which begins its operation upon the waters at the stretching out of the hand of Moses, and ceases at the same signal, and that at the precise moment when the return of the waters would be most fatal to the Egyptian pursuing army.

It has, indeed, been asked whether there were not some ledges of rocks where the water was shallow, so that an army, at particular times, might pass over; and whether the Etesian winds, which blow strongly all summer from the northwest, might not blow so violently against the sea as to keep it back "on a heap." But if there were any force in these questions, it is plain that such suppositions would leave the destruction of the Egyptians unaccounted for. To show that there is no weight in them at all, let

the place where the passage of the Red Sea was effected be first noted. Some fix it near Suez, at the head of the gulf; but if there were satisfactory evidence of this, it ought also to be taken into the account, that formerly the gulf extended at least twenty, five miles north of Suez, the place where it terminates at present (Lord Valentia's Travels, vol. iii, p. 344.) But the names as well as tradition, fix the passage about ten hours journey lower down, at Clysma, or the valley of Bedea. The name given by

Moses to the place where the Israelites encamped before the sea was divided, was Pihahiroth, which signifies "the mouth of the ridge," or of that chain of mountains which line the western coast of the Red Sea; and as there is but one mouth of that chain through which an immense multitude of men, women, and children, could possibly pass when flying before their enemies, there can be no doubt whatever respecting the situation of Pihahiroth; and the modern names of conspicuous places in its

neighborhood prove, that those, by whom such names were given, believed that this was the place at which the Israelites passed the sea in safety, and where Pharaoh was drowned. Thus, we have close by Piliahiroth, on the western side of the gulf, a mountain called Attaka, which signifies deliverance. On the eastern coast opposite is a headland called Ras Musa, or "the Cape of Moses;" somewhat lower, Harnam Faraun, "Pharaoh's Springs;" while at these places, the general name of the gulf itself is

Bahr-al-Kolsum, "the Bay of Submersion," in which there is a whirlpool called Birket Faraun, "the Pool of Pharaoh." This, then, was the passage of the Israelites; and the depth of the sea here is stated by Bruce, who may be consulted as to these localities, at about fourteen fathoms, (82 ft) and the breadth at between three and four leagues (9-12 mi.). But there is no "ledge of rocks," and as to the "Etesian wind," the same traveler observes, "If the Etesian wind blowing from the northwest in summer,

could keep the sea as a wall, on the right, of fifty feet high, still the difficulty would remain of building the wall to the left, or to the north. If the Etesian winds had done this once, they must have repeated it many a time before or since, from the same causes." The wind which actually did blow, according to the history, either as an instrument of dividing the waters, or, which is more probable, as the instrument of drying the ground, after the waters were divided by the immediate energy of the

Divine power, was not a north wind, but an "east wind;" and as Dr. Hales observes, "seems to be introduced by way of anticipation, to exclude the natural agency which might be afterward resorted to for solving the miracle; for it is remarkable that the monsoon in the Red Sea blows the summer half of the year from the north, and the winter half from the south, neither of which could produce the miracle in question."

The miraculous character of this event is, therefore, most strongly marked. An expanse of water, and that water a sea, of from nine to twelve miles broad, known to be exceedingly subject to agitations, is divided, and a wall of water is formed on each hand, affording a passage-on dry land for the Israelites. The phenomenon occurs too just as the Egyptian host are on the point of overtaking the fugitives, and ceases at the moment when the latter reach the opposite shore in safety, and when their enemies are

in the midst of the passage, in the only position in which the closing of the wall of waters on each side could insure the entire destruction of so large a force!

The falling of the MANNA in the wilderness for forty years, is another unquestionable miracle, and one in which there could be neither mistake on the part of those who were sustained by it, nor fraud on the part of Moses. That this event was not produced by the ordinary course of nature, is

rendered certain by the fact, that the same wilderness has been traveled by individuals, and by large bodies of men, from the earliest ages to the present, but no such supply of food was ever met with, except on this occasion; and its miraculous character is farther marked by the following circumstances:- 1. That it fell but six days in the week:2. That it fell in such prodigious quantities as sustained three millions of souls:3. That there fell a double quantity every Friday, to serve the

Israelites for the next day, which was their Sabbath:4. That what was gathered on the first five days of the week stank and bred worms, if kept above one day; but that which was gathered on Friday kept sweet for two days: and 5. That it continued falling while the Israelites remained in the wilderness, but ceased as soon as they came out of it, and got corn to eat in the land of Canaan. (Universal History, 1. 1, c. 7.) Let these very extraordinary particulars be considered, and they at once confirm

the fact, while they unequivocally establish the miracle.

No people could be deceived in these circumstances; no person could persuade them of their truth, if they had not occurred; and the whole was so clearly out of the regular course of nature, as to mark unequivocally the interposition of God. To the majority of the numerous miracles recorded in the Old Testament, the same remarks apply, and upon them the same miraculous

characters are as indubitably impressed. If we proceed to those of Christ, the evidence becomes, if possible, more indubitable. They were clearly above the power of either human agency or natural causes: they were public: they were such as could not admit of collusion or deception: they were performed under such circumstances as rendered it impossible for the witnesses and reporters of them to mistake: they were often done in the presence of malignant, scrutinizing, and intelligent

enemies, the Jewish rulers, who acknowledged the facts, but attributed them to an evil, supernatural agency; and there is no interruption in the testimony, from the age in which they were wrought, to this day. It would be trifling with the reader to examine instances so well known in their circumstances, for the slightest recollection of the feeding of the multitudes in the desert;- the healing of the paralytic, who, because of the multitude, was let down from the house top;- the instant cure of the

withered hand in the synagogue, near Jerusalem, where the Pharisees were "watching our Lord whether he would heal on the Sabbath day;" - the raising from the dead of the daughter of Jairus, the widow's son, and Lazarus; and many other instances of miraculous power, - will be sufficient to convince any ingenuous mind, that all the characters of real and adequately attested miracles meet in them. That great miracle, the resurrection of our Lord himself from the dead, so

often appealed to by the first teachers of his religion, may, however, be here properly adduced, with its convincing and irrefragable circumstances, as completing this branch of the external evidence.

That it is a miracle in its highest sense for a person actually dead to raise himself again to life, cannot be doubted; and when wrought, as the raising of Christ was, in attestation of a Divine commission, it is evidence of the most irrefragable kind. So it has been

regarded by unbelievers, who have bent all their force against it; and so it was regarded by Divine Providence, who rendered its proofs ample and indubitable in proportion to its importance. Let us, then, examine the circumstances as recorded in the history.

In the first place, the reality of Christ's death is circumstantially and fully stated, though if no circumstantial evidence had been adduced, it is not to be supposed that they, who had sought his death

with so much eagerness, would be inattentive to the full execution of the sentence for which they had clamored. The execution was public; he was crucified with common malefactors, in the usual place of execution; the soldiers brake not his legs, the usual practice when they would hasten the death of the malefactor, observing that he was dead already. His enemies knew that he had predicted his resurrection, and would therefore be careful that he should not be removed from the cross before death

had actually taken place; and Pilate refused to deliver the body for burial until he had expressly inquired of the officer on duty, whether he were already dead. Nor was he taken away to an unknown or distant tomb. Joseph of Arimathea made no secret of the place where he had buried him. It was in his own family tomb, and the Pharisees knew where to direct the watch which was appointed to guard the body against the approach of his disciples. The reality of the death of Christ is therefore established.

2. But by both parties, by the Pharisees on the one part, and by the disciples on the other, it was agreed, that the body was missing, and that, in the state of death, it was never more seen! The sepulcher was made sure, the stone at the mouth being sealed, and a watch of sixty Roman soldiers appointed to guard it, and yet the body was not to be found. Let us see, then, how each party accounts for this fact. The disciples affirm, that two of their company, going early in the morning to the sepulcher to embalm the

body, saw an angel descend and roll away the. stone, sit upon it, and invite them to see the place where their Lord had lain, informing them that he was risen, and commanding them to tell the other disciples of the fact;- that others went to the sepulcher, and found not the body, though the grave clothes remained; that, at different times, he appeared to them, both separately and when assembled; that they conversed with him; that he partook of their food; that they touched his body; that he continued to make

his appearance among them for nearly six weeks, and then, after many advices, finally led them out as far as Bethany, and, in the presence of them all, ascended into the clouds of heaven. This is the statement of the disciples.

The manner in which the Jewish Sanhedrim accounts for the absence of our Lord's body from the sepulcher is that the Roman soldiers having slept on their posts, the disciples stole away the corpse. We know of no other account. Neither in

their earliest books nor traditions is there any other attempt to explain the alleged resurrection of Jesus. We are warranted therefore in concluding, that the Pharisees had nothing but this to oppose to the positive testimony of the disciples, who also added, and published it to the world, that the Roman soldiers related to the Pharisees "all the things that were done," the earthquake, the appearance of the angel, &c; but that they were bribed to say," His disciples

came by night and stole him away, while we slept"

On the statement of the Pharisees we may remark, that though those who were not convinced by our Lord's former miracles were in a state of mind to resist the impression of his resurrection, yet, in this attempt to destroy the testimony of the apostles, they fell below their usual subtlety in circulating a story which carried with it its own refutation. This, however, may be accounted for, from the hurry and agitation of the moment,

and the necessity under which they were laid to invent something to amuse the populace, who were not indisposed to charge them with the death of Jesus. Of this it is clear that the Pharisees were apprehensive, "fearing the people" on this as on former occasions. This appears from the manner in which the Sanhedrim addressed the apostles, Acts 5:28: "Did we not straightly command you, that ye should not teach in this name?

and behold you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and INTEND TO BRING THIS MAN'S BLOOD UPON us." The majority of the people were not enemies of Jesus, though the Pharisees were; and it was a mob of base fellows, and strangers, of which Jerusalem was full at the Passover, who had been excited to clamor for his death. The body of the Jewish populace heard him gladly; great numbers of them had been deeply impressed by the raising of Lazarus, in the very neighborhood of

Jerusalem, and had in consequence accompanied him with public acclamations, as the Messiah, into Jerusalem. These sentiments of the people of Jerusalem toward our Lord were transferred to the apostles; for after Peter and John had healed the man at the gate of the temple, and refused to obey the council in keeping silent as to Christ, when the chief priests had "farther threatened them, they let them go, finding not how they might punish them BECAUSE OF THE PEOPLE."

It was in a state of considerable agitation, therefore, that this absurd and self-exposed rumor was hastily got up, and as hastily published. We may add, also, that it was hastily abandoned; for it is remarkable, that it is never adverted to by the Pharisees in any of those legal processes instituted at Jerusalem against the first preachers of Christ as the risen Messiah, within a few days after the alleged event itself. First, Peter and John are brought before their great council; then the whole body of the apostles

twice; on all these occasions they affirm the fact of the resurrection, before the very men who had originated the tale of the stealing away of the body, and in none of these instances did the chief priests oppose this story to the explicit testimony of his disciples having seen, felt, and conversed with Jesus, after his passion. This silence cannot be accounted for but on the supposition that, in the presence of the apostles at least, they would not hazard its exposure. If at any time the Roman guards

could have been brought forward effectually to confront the apostles, it was when the whole body of the latter were in custody, and before the council, where indeed the great question at issue between the parties was, whether Jesus were risen from the dead or not. On the one part, the apostles stand before the rulers affirming the fact, and are ready to go into the detail of their testimony: the only testimony which could be opposed to this is that of the Roman soldiers, but not one of the sixty is

brought up, and they do not even advert to the rumor which the rulers had proclaimed. On the contrary, one of them, Gamaliel, advises the council to take no farther proceedings, but to let the matter go on, for this reason, that if it were of men it would come to naught, but if of God, they could not overthrow it, and would be found to fight against God himself. Now it is plain that if the Pharisees themselves believed in the story they had put into the mouths of the Roman soldiers, no

doctor of the law, like Gamaliel, would have given such advice, and equally impossible is it that the council should unanimously have agreed to it. With honest proofs of an imposture in their hands, they could never thus have tamely surrendered the public to delusion and their own characters to infamy; nor, if they had, could they have put their non-interference on the ground assumed by Gamaliel. The very principle of his decision supposes, that both sides acknowledged something

very extraordinary which might prove a work of God; and that time would make it manifest. It admitted in point of fact, that JESUS MIGHT BE RISEN AGAIN. The whole council, by adopting Gamaliel's decision, admitted this possibility, or how could time show the whole work, built entirely upon this fact, to be a work of God, or not? And thus Gamaliel, without intending it, certainly, has afforded evidence in favor of the resurrection of our Lord the more powerful from its being incidental.

The absurdity involved in the only testimony ever brought against the resurrection of our Lord, rendered it indeed impossible to maintain the story. That a Roman guard should be found off their watch, or asleep, a fault which the military law of that people punished with death, was most incredible; that, if they were asleep, the timid disciples of Christ should dare to make the attempt, when the noise of removing the stone and bearing away the body might awaken them, is very improbable; and, above all,

as it has been often put, either the soldiers, were awake or asleep-if awake, why did they suffer a few unarmed peasants and women to take away the body?

and if asleep, how came they to know that the disciples were the persons?

Against the resurrection of Christ, we may then with confidence say, there is no testimony whatever; it stands, like every other fact in the evangelic history, entirely uncontradicted from the earliest ages to the present; and though we

grant that it does not follow, that, because we do not admit the account given of the absence of our Lord's body from the sepulcher by the Jews, we must therefore admit that of the apostles, yet the very inability of those who first objected to the fact of the resurrection to account for the absence of the body, which had been entirely, in their own power, affords very strong presumptive evidence in favor of the statement of the disciples. Under such circumstances the loss of the body became

itself an extraordinary event.

The tomb was carefully closed and sealed by officers appointed for that purpose, a guard was set, and yet the body is missing. The story of the Pharisees does not at all account for the fact; it is too absurd to be for a moment credited; and unless the history of the evangelists be admitted, that singular fact remains still unaccounted for.

But in addition to this presumption, let the circumstances of credibility

in the testimony of the disciples be collected, and the evidence becomes indubitable.

The account given by the disciples was not even an improbable one, for allow the miracles wrought by Christ during his life, and the resurrection follows as a natural conclusion; for before that event can be maintained to be in the lowest sense improbable, the whole history of his public life, in opposition not to the evangelists merely, but, as we have seen, to the testimony of

Jews and heathens themselves, must be proved to be a fable.

The manner in which this testimony is given, is in its favor, So far from the evangelists having written in concert, they give an account of the transaction so varied as to make it clear that they wrote independently of each other; and yet so agreeing in the leading facts, and so easily capable of reconcilement in those minute circumstances in which some discrepancy at first sight appears, that

their evidence in every part carries with it the air of honesty and truth.

Their own account sufficiently proves, that they were incredulous as to the fact when announced, and so not disposed to be imposed upon by an imagination. This, indeed was impossible; the appearances of Christ were too numerous, and were continued for too long a time, - forty days.

They could not mistake, and it is as impossible that they should deceive; impossible that upward of

five hundred persons to whom Christ appeared, should have been persuaded by the artful few, that they had seen and conversed with Christ, or to agree, not only without reward, but in renunciation of all interests and in hazard of all dangers and of death itself, to continue to assert a falsehood.

Nor did a long period elapse before the fact of the resurrection was proclaimed; nor was a distant place chosen in which to make the first report of it. These would

have been suspicious circumstances; but on the contrary the disciples testify the fact from the day of the resurrection itself. One of them in a public speech at the feast of Pentecost, addressed to a mixed multitude, affirms it; and the same testimony is given by the whole college of apostles, before the great council twice: this too was done at Jerusalem, the scene of the whole transaction, and in the presence of those most interested in detecting the falsehood. Their evidence was given, not only before

private but public persons, before magistrates and tribunals, "before philosophers and rabbis, before courtiers, before lawyers, before people expert in examining and cross-examining witnesses," and yet what Christian ever impeached his accomplices? or discovered this pretended imposture? or was convicted of prevarication? or was even confronted with others who could contradict him as to this or any other matter of fact relative to his religion? To this testimony of the

apostles was added the seal of miracles, wrought as publicly, and being as unequivocal in their nature, as open to public investigation, and as numerous, as those of their Lord himself. The miracle of the gift of tongues was in proof of the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ; and the miracles of healing were wrought by the apostles in their Master's name, and therefore were the proofs both of his resurrection and of their commission. Indeed, of the want of supernatural evidence the

Jews, the ancient enemies of Christianity, never complained. They allowed the miracles both of Christ and his apostles; but by ascribing them to Satan, and regarding them as diabolical delusions and wonders wrought in order to seduce them from the law, their admissions are at once in proof of the truth of the Gospel history, and enable us to account for their resistance to an evidence so majestic and overwhelming. (6)

(6) The evidences of our Lord's resurrection are

fully exhibited in WEST on the Resurrection, SHERLOCK'S Trial of the Witnesses, and Dr. COOK'S Illustration of the Evidence of Christ's Resurrection.

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16 OBJECTIONS TO THE PROOF FROM MIRACLES CONSIDERED

The first objection to the conclusiveness of the argument in favor of the Mosaic and Christian systems which is drawn from their miracles, is

grounded upon facts and doctrines supposed to be found in the Scriptures themselves.

It is stated, that the Scriptures assert miraculous acts to have been performed in opposition to the mission and to the doctrine of those who have professed themselves accredited instruments of making known revelations of the will of God to mankind; and that the sacred writers frequently speak of such events as possible, nay as certain future occurrences,

even when they have not actually taken place. The question therefore is, how miracles should be conclusive proofs of truth, when they actually have been, or may be wrought, in proof of falsehood, "Shall a miracle confirm the belief of one, and not confirm the belief of more Gods than one, if wrought for that purpose?" (Bishop FLEETWOOD on Miracles,) The instances usually adduced are the feats of the Egyptian magi in opposition to Moses, and the raising of Samuel by the witch of Endor. The

presumptions that such works are considered possible, are drawn from a passage of Moses in the book of Deuteronomy; a prediction respecting false christs in St. Matthew's Gospel; and the prediction of the man of sin, in the writings of St. Paul: all of which caution the reader against being seduced from the truth, by "signs and wonders" performed by false teachers.

With respect to the miracles, or pretended miracles, wrought by the magicians of Pharaoh,

some preliminary considerations are to be noted.

1. That whether the persons called magicians were regular priests, or a distinct class of men, they were known to be expert in producing singular effects and apparent transformations in natural objects, for after Moses had commenced his marvelous operations, they were sent for by Pharaoh to oppose their power and skill to his.

2. That they succeeded, or appeared to succeed, in three attempts to imitate

the works of Moses, and were then controlled, or attempted a work beyond their power, and were obliged to acknowledge themselves vanquished by "the finger of God." The rest of the miracles wrought by Moses went on without any attempt at imitation.

3. That these works of whatever kind they might be, were wrought to hold up the idols of Egypt as equal in power to Jehovah, the God of Moses and the Israelites. This is a consideration of

importance, and the fact is easily proved. If they were mere jugglers and performed their wonders by sleight of hand, they did not wish the people to know this, or their influence over them could not have been maintained. They therefore used "enchantments," incongruous and strange ceremonies, rites and offerings, which among all superstitious people have been supposed to have a powerful effect in commanding the influence of supernatural beings in their favor and subjecting

them to their will. We have an instance of this use of "enchantments" in the case of Balaam, who lived in the same age; and this example goes very far, we think, to settle the sense in which the magi used "enchantments;" for though the original word used is different, yet its ideal meaning is equally capable of being applied to the rites of incantation, and in this sense it is confirmed by the whole story. (7) Whatever connection therefore may be supposed to exist between the "enchantments" used and

the works performed, or if all connection be denied, this species of religious rite was performed, and the people understood, us it was intended they should understand, that the wonders which the magi per-formed were done under the influence of their deities. The object of Pharaoh and the magicians was to show, that their gods were as powerful as the God who had commissioned Moses, and that they could protect them from his displeasure, though they should refuse at the command of his

commissioned servant to let his people go.

(7) "They also did in like manner with their enchantments. The word (lahatim), comes from (lahat) to burn, to set on fire; and probably signifies such incantations as required lustral fires, sacrifices, fumigations, burning of incense, aromatic, and odoriferous drugs, &c, as the means of evoking departed spirits, or assistant demons, by whose ministry, it is probable, the magicians in question wrought some of their

deceptive miracles: for as the term miracle properly signifies something which exceeds the power of nature or art to produce, (see verse 9;) hence there could be no miracle in this case, but those wrought through the power of God, by the ministry of Moses and Aaron." (Dr. ADAM CLARKE in loc.)

But whatever pretence there was of supernatural assistance, it is contended by several writers of great and deserved authority, that no miracles were wrought at all on these

occasions; that, by dexterity and previous preparation, serpents were substituted by the magicians for rods; that a coloring matter was infused into a portion of water; and that as frogs, through the previous miracle of Moses, everywhere abounded in the land of Egypt, a sufficient number might be easily procured to cover some given space; and they farther argue, that when the miracles of Moses became such as to defy the possibility of the most distant imitation, at that

point the simulations of the magi ceased.

The obvious objection to this is, that "Moses describes the works of the magicians in the very same language as he does his own, and therefore there is reason to conclude that they were equally miraculous." To this it is replied, that nothing is more common than to speak of professed jugglers as doing what they pretend or appear to do, and that this language never misleads. But it is also stated, and the observation

is of great weight, that the word used by Moses is one of great latitude - "they DID so," that is, in like manner, importing that they attempted some imitation of Moses; because it is used when they failed in their attempt - "they DID so to bring forth lice; but they could not." Farther, Mr. Farmer, Dr. Hales, and others, contend, that the root of the word translated "enchantments" fitly expresses any "secret artifices or methods of deception, whereby false appearances are imposed

upon the spectators." For a farther explanation and defense of this hypothesis, an extract from Farmer's Dissertation on Miracles is given, at the end of the chapter. (8)

(8) See note A at the end of the chapter.

Much as these observations deserve attention, it may be very much doubted, whether mere manual dexterity and sleight of hand can sufficiently account for the effects actually produced, if only human agents were engaged; and it does not

appear impracticable to meet any difficulty which may arise out of an admission of supernatural evil agency in the imitation of the three first wonders performed by Moses.

It ought however in the first place to be previously stated, that the history before us is not in fairness to be judged of as an insulated statement, independent of the principles and doctrines of the revelation in which it is found. With that revelation it is bound up, and by the light of its doctrine it is to

be judged. No infidel, who would find in Scripture an argument against Scripture, has the right to consider any passage separately, or to apply to it the rule of his own theory on religious subjects, unless he has first, by fair and honest argument, disposed of the evidences of the Scriptures themselves. He must disprove the authenticity of the sacred record, and the truth of the facts contained in it, - he must rid himself of every proof of the Divine mission of Moses, and of the evidence of his

miracles, before he is entitled to this right; and if he is inadequate to this task, he can only consider the case as a difficulty, standing on the admission of the Scriptures themselves, and to be explained, as far as possible, on the principles of that general system of religion which the Scriptures themselves supply. In this nothing more is asked, than argumentative fairness. The same rule is still more obligatory upon those interpreters who profess to believe in the Divine

authority of the sacred records; for by the aid of their general principles and unequivocal doctrines, every difficulty which they profess to extract from them, is surely to be examined in order to ascertain its real character. What, however, is the real difficulty in the present case, supposing it to be allowed that the magicians performed works superior to the power of any mere human agent, and therefore supernatural? This it is the more necessary to settle, as the difficulty supposed to arise

out of this admission has been exaggerated.

It seems generally to have been supposed, that these counter performances were wrought to contradict the Divine mission of Moses, and that by allowing them to be supernatural, we are brought into the difficulty of supposing, that God may authenticate the mission of his servants by miracles, and that miracles may be wrought also to contradict this attestation, thus leaving us in a state of uncertainty. This view is not however at all

countenanced by the history. No intimation is given that the magicians performed their wonders to prove that there was no such God as Jehovah, or that Moses was not commissioned by him. For as they did not deny the works of Moses to be really performed, they could no more deny that he did them by the power of his God, than they would deny that they themselves performed their exploits by the assistance of their gods, - a point which they doubtless wished to impress upon Pharaoh and

the people, and for which both were prepared by their previous belief in their idols, and in the effect of incantations. For to suppose that Pharaoh sent for men to play mere juggling tricks, knowing them to be mere jugglers, seems too absurd to be for a moment admitted, except indeed, as some have assumed, that he thought the works of Moses to be sleight-of-hand deceptions, which he might expose by the imitations of his own jugglers. But nothing of this is even hinted at in the history, and at least the

second work of Moses was such as entirely to preclude the idea-the water became blood throughout the whole land of Egypt. It was not intended by these works of the Egyptian magi, to oppose the existence of Jehovah, for there was nothing in polytheism which required it to be denied, that every people had their own local divinities, - nothing indeed which required its votaries to disallow the existence of even a Supreme Deity, the "Father of gods and men;" and that Moses was commissioned by this

Jehovah," the God of the Hebrews," to command Pharaoh to let his people go, was in point of fact acknowledged, rather than denied, by allowing his works, and attempting to imitate them. The argument upon their own principles was certainly as strong for Moses, as for the Egyptian priests. If their extraordinary works proved them the servants of their gods, the works of Moses proved him to be the servant of his God.

Thus in this series of singular transactions was

there no evidence from counter miracles, even should it be allowed that real miracles were wrought, to counteract or nullify the mission of Moses, or to deny the existence or even to question any of the attributes of the true Jehovah. All that can be said is, that singular works, which were intended to pass for miraculous ones, were wrought, not to disprove anything which Moses advanced, but to prove that the Egyptian deities had power equal to the God of the Jews; and in

which contest their votaries ultimately failed-that pretension being abundantly refuted by the transcendent nature and number of the works of Moses; and by their being "plagues," from which the objects of their idolatry could not deliver them, and which, indeed, as the learned Bryant has shown, were intended expressly to humble idolatry itself, and put it to open and bitter shame,

If in this instance we see nothing to contravene the evidence of miracles, as

attestations of the Divine commission of Moses, so in no other case recorded in Scripture. The raising of the spirit of Samuel by the witch of Endor, is indeed the only instance of anything approaching to miraculous agency ascribed to an evil spirit, unless we add the power exercised by Satan over Job, and his bearing our Lord through the air, and placing him upon an exceeding high mountain.

But whether these events were properly speaking miraculous, may be more

than doubted; and if they were, neither they, nor the raising of Samuel profess to give any evidence in opposition to the mission of any servant of God, or to the doctrines taught by him. On the contrary, so far are the Scriptures from affording any examples of miracles, either real or simulated, wrought in direct opposition to the mission and theological doctrine of the inspired messengers of God in any age, that in cases where the authority of the messenger was fairly brought into question, the examples are

of a quite different kind. Elijah brought the matter to issue, whether Jehovah or Baal were God; and while the priests of Baal heard neither "voice nor sound" in return to all their prayers, the God of Israel answered his own prophet by fire, and by that ratified his servant's commission and his own Divinity before all Israel. The devils in our Lord's days confessed him to be the Son of the most high God. The damsel possessed with a spirit of divination at Thyatira, gave testimony to the mission of the Apostle Paul and his

companions. We read of no particular acts performed by Elymas the sorcerer; but, whatever he could perform, when he attempted to turn away Sergius Paulus from the faith he was struck blind. And thus we find that Scripture does nowhere represent miracles to have been actually wrought in contradiction of the authority of any whom God had commissioned to teach his will to mankind.

But that the Scriptures assume this as possible, is argued from Deut. 13:1, &c,

- where the people are commanded not to follow a prophet or dreamer of dreams, who would entice them into idolatry, though he should give them "a sign or wonder, and the sign or wonder come to pass." Here, however, it appears, that not a miracle, but a prophecy of some wonderful event is spoken of: for this sign or wonder was to come to pass. Nor can the prediction be considered as more than some shrewd and accidental guess, either from himself, or by the assistance of some evil

supernatural agency, (a subject we shall just now consider,) but in fact, falling short, though in some respects wonderful, of a true prediction; because in the eighteenth chapter of this Same book, the fulfillment of the words of a prophet is made the conclusive proof of his Divine commission, nor can we suppose the same writer within the distance of a few sentences to contradict himself.

In Matthew 24:24, it is predicted that false christs and false prophets shall

arise and show "great signs and wonders" calculated to deceive men, though not "the elect." And in 2 Thess. 2:8 and 9, the coming of the man of sin is said to be "after the working of Satan with power, and signs, and lying wonders," The latter prediction refers unquestionably to the papacy, and to works wrought to lead men from the true interpretation of the Gospel, though not to annul in the least the Divine authority of Christ and his apostles; the former supposes works which, as being wrought by

false christs, are opposed to the commission of our Lord, and is indeed the only instance in which a direct contest between the miracles which attest the authority of a Divine messenger and "great signs and wonders" wrought to attest an opposing and contradictory authority, is spoken of.

What these "signs and wonders" may be, it is therefore necessary to ascertain.

In the Thessalonians they are ascribed to the "working of Satan," and in

order to bring the general principles of the revelation of the Scriptures to bear upon these, its more obscure and difficult parts, a rule to which we are in fairness bound, it must be observed.

1. That the introduction of sin into the world is ascribed to the malice and seductive cunning of a powerful evil spirit, the head and leader of innumerable others. 2. That when a Redeemer was promised to man, that promise, in its very first annunciation, indicated a

long and arduous struggle between HIM and these evil supernatural agents. 3. That it is the fact, that a powerful contest has been maintained in the world ever since, between truth and error, idolatry, superstition, and will worship, and the pure and authorized worship of the true God. 4. That the Scriptures uniformly represent the Redeemer and Restorer at the head of one party of men in the struggle, and Satan at the head of the other; each making use of men as their instruments, though

consistently with their general free agency. 5. That almighty God carries on his purposes to win man back to obedience to him, by the exhibition of truth, with its proper evidences; by commands, promises, threats, chastisements, and final punishments; and that Satan opposes this design by exhibitions of error, and false religion, gratifying to the corrupt passions and appetites of men; and especially seeks to influence powerful agents among men to seduce others by their example; and to destroy

the truth by persecution and force. 6. That the false religions of the heathen, as well as the, corruptions of Christianity, took place under this diabolical influence; and that the idols of the heathen were not only the devices of devils, but often devils themselves, (9) made the objects of the worship of men, either for their wickedness or their supposed power to hurt. (1)

(9) Some of the demons worshipped by heathens had a benevolent reputation, and these were

no doubt suggested by the tradition of good angels; others were malignant, and were none other than the evil angels, devils, handed down by the same tradition. Thus Plutarch says, "It has been a very ancient opinion, that there are malevolent demons, who envy good men, and oppose them in their actions," &c,

(1) The passion of Satan to be worshipped appears strongly marked in our Lord's temptation:

"All these will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and

worship me." In all ages evil and sanguinary beings have been deified. It was so in the time of Moses, and remains so to this day in India and Africa, where devil worship is openly professed. In Ceylon nothing is more common; and in many parts of Africa every village has its devil house.

Now as the objection which we are considering is professedly taken from Scripture, its doctrine on this subject must be explained by itself, and for this reason the above

particulars have been introduced; but the inquiry must go farther. These evil spirits are in a state of hostility to the truth, and oppose it by endeavoring to seduce men to erroneous opinions, and a corrupt worship.

All their power may therefore be expected to be put forth in accomplishment of their designs; but to what does their power extend? This is an important question, and the Scriptures afford us no small degree of assistance in deciding it.

1. They can perform no work of creation; for this throughout Scripture is constantly attributed to God, and is appealed to by him as the proof of his own Divinity in opposition to idols, and to all beings whatever - "To whom will ye liken me, or shall I be equal, saith the Holy One? Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things." This claim must of necessity cut off from every other being the power of creating in any degree, that is, of making any thing out of nothing; for a being

possessing the power to create an atom out of nothing, could not want the ability of making a world. Nay, creation, in its lower sense, is in this passage denied to any but God; that is, the forming goodly and perfect natural objects, such as the heavens and the earth are replenished with, from a pre-existent matter, as he formed all things from matter unorganized and chaotic. No "sign," therefore, no "wonder" which implies creation, is possible to finite beings; and whatever power any of them may

have over matter, it cannot extend to any act of creation.

2. Life and death are out of the power of evil spirits. The dominion of these is so exclusively claimed by God himself in many passages of Scripture which are familiar, that they need not be cited, - "Unto God the Lord belong the issues from death" - "I kill, and I make alive again," No

"signs or wonders," therefore, which imply dominion over these, - the power to produce a living being, or to give life to the

dead, - are within the power of evil spirits; these are works of God 3. The knowledge of future events, especially of those which depend on free or contingent causes, is not attainable by evil spirits, This is the property of God, who founds upon it the proof of his Deity;' and therefore excludes it from all others: "Show the, things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods," Isa. 40:25, 26; 41:23. They cannot therefore utter a prediction in the strict and proper sense; though from

their great knowledge of human affairs, and their long habits of observation, their conjectures may be surprising, and often accomplished, and so if uttered by any of their servants may have in some cases the appearance of prophecies.

4. They do not know certainly the thoughts and characters of men. "That," as St. Augustine observes, "they have a great facility in discovering what is in the minds of men by the least external sign they give of it, and such as the most

sagacious men cannot perceive," and that they may have other means of access too to the mind beside these external signs; and that a constant observation of human character, to which they are led by their favorite work of temptation, gives them great insight into the character and tempers and weakness of individuals, may be granted; but that the absolute, immediate, infallible knowledge of the thoughts and character belongs alone to God,, is clearly the doctrine of Scripture: it is the Lord

"who searcheth the heart" and

"knoweth what is in man;" and in Jeremiah 7:9,10, the knowledge of the heart is attributed exclusively to God alone.

Let all these things then be considered, and we shall be able to ascertain, at least in part, the limits within which this evil agency is able to operate in opposing the truth, and in giving currency to falsehood; at least we shall be able to show, that the Scriptures assign no power to this "working of Satan" to

oppose the truth by such "signs and wonders" as many have supposed.

In no instance can evil spirits oppose the truth, we do not say by equal, or nearly equal miracles and prophecies, but by real ones-of both, their works are but simulations we take the case of miracles. A creature cannot create; this is the doctrine of Scripture, and it will serve to explain the wonders of the Egyptian magi. They were, we think, very far above the sleight of hand of mere men unassisted; and we

have seen, that as idolatry is diabolic, and even is the worship of devils themselves, and the instrument of their opposition to God, the Scriptures suppose them to be exceedingly active in its support. It is perfectly accordant with this principle, therefore, to conclude, that Pharaoh's priests had as much of the assistance of the demons whose ministers they were, as they were able to exert. But then the great principles we have just deduced from Scripture, oblige us to limit this

power. It was not a power of working real miracles, but of simulating them in order to uphold the credit of idolatry. Now the three miracles of Moses which were simulated, all involved a creating energy. A serpent was created out of the matter of the rod; the frogs, from their immense multitude, appear also to have been created; and blood was formed out of the matter of water. But in the imitations of the magi, there was no creation: we are forbidden by the doctrine of Scripture to allow this, and therefore

there must have been deception and the substitution of one thing for another; which, though performed in a manner apparently much above human adroitness, might be very much within the power of a number of invisible and active spirits. Serpents, in a country where they abound, might be substituted for rods; frogs, which, after they had been brought upon the land by Moses, were numerous enough, might be suddenly thrown upon a cleared place; and the water, which could only be

obtained by digging, for the plague of Moses was upon all the streams and reservoirs, and the quantity being in consequence very limited, might by their invisible activity be easily mixed with blood or a coloring matter. In all this there was something of the imposture of the priests, and much of the assistance of Satan; but in the strict sense no miracle was wrought by either, while the works of Moses were, from their extent, unequivocally miraculous.

For the reasons we have given, no apparent miracles wrought in support of falsehood, can for a moment become rivals of the great miracles by which the revelations of the Scripture are attested. For instance, nothing like that of feeding several thousands of people with a few loaves and fishes can occur, for that supposes creation of the matter and the form of bread and fish; no giving life to the dead, for the "issues from death" belong exclusively to God. Accordingly we find in the "signs and wonders"

wrought by the false prophets and christs predicted in Matthew, whether we suppose them mere impostors, or the immediate agents of Satan also, nothing of this decisive kind to attest their mission. THEUDAS promised to divide Jordan, and seduced many to follow him; but he was killed by the Roman troops before he could perform his miracle. Another promised that the walls of Jerusalem should fall down; but his followers were also put to the sword by Felix. The false Christ,

BARCHOCHEBA, raised a large party; but no miracles of his are recorded. Another arose, A. D. 434, and pretended to divide the sea; but hid himself after many of his besotted followers had plunged into it, in faith that it would retire from them, and were drowned. Many other false christs appeared at different times; but the most noted was SABBATAI SEVI, in 1666. The delusion of the Jews with respect to him was very great. Many of his followers were strangely affected, prophesied of his

greatness, and appeared by their contortions to be under some supernatural influence; but the grand seignior having apprehended Sabbatai, gave him the choice of proving his Messiahship, by suffering a body of archers to shoot at him; after which, if he was not wounded, he would acknowledge him to be the Messias; or, if he declined this, that he should be impaled, or turn Turk. He chose the latter, and the delusion was dissipated.

Now whatever "signs or wonders" may be wrought by any of these, it is clear from the absence of all record of any unequivocal miracle; that they were either illusions or impostures.

The same course of remark applies to prophecy. To know the future certainly, is the special prerogative of God. The false prophet anticipated by Moses in Deuteronomy, who was to utter wonderful predictions which should "come to pass" is not therefore to be supposed to utter

predictions strictly and truly, as founded upon an absolute knowledge of the future. A shrewd man may guess happily in some instances, and his conjectures when accomplished may appear to be "a sign and a wonder" to a people willing to be deceived, because loving the idolatry to which he would lead them. Still farther, the Scripture doctrine does not discountenance the idea of an evil supernatural agency "working" with him; and then the superior sagacity of evil spirits may give to

his conjectures, founded upon their own natural foresight of probabilities, a more decided air of prophecy, and thus aid the wicked purpose of seducing men from God's worship. Real and unequivocal prophecy is however impossible to them, and indeed we have, no instance of any approach to it among the false prophets recorded in the Jewish history. The heathen oracles may afford us also a comment on this. They were exceedingly numerous; many of them were highly celebrated; all

professed to reveal the future; some wonderful stories are recorded of them; and it is difficult to refer the whole to the imposture of priests, though much of that was ultimately detected. That they kept their credit for two thousand years, and were silenced by the spread of the Gospel, and that, almost entirely, before the time of the establishment of Christianity by Constantine, as acknowledged by heathen authors themselves-that they were in many instances silenced by

individual Christians, is openly declared in the apologies of the Christian fathers, so that the Pythonic inspiration could never be renewed- these are all strong presumptions at least, that, in this mockery of the Oracle of Zion, this counterfeit of the standing evidence given by prophecy to truth, there was much of diabolical agency, though greatly mingled with imposture.

(2) Nevertheless, the ambiguity and obscurity by which the oracles sported with the credulity of the

heathen, and miserably seduced them, often to the most diabolical wickedness, and yet, in many cases, whatever might happen, preserved the appearance of having told the truth, sufficiently proved the want of a certain and clear knowledge of the future; and, upon the showing of their own writers, nothing was ever uttered by an oracle which, considered at prophecy, can be for a moment put in comparison with the least remarkable of those Scripture predictions which are

brought forward in proof of the truth of the Scriptures. When they are brought into comparison, the most celebrated of them appear contemptible, (3) We may then very confidently conclude, that as Scripture nowhere represents any "signs or wonders" as actually wrought to contradict the evidence of the Divine commission of Moses, of Christ and his apostles; so in those passages in which it supposes that they may occur, and predicts that they will be wrought in favor of falsehood, and, in

the case of the false christs, in opposition to the true Messiah, they do not give any countenance to the notion, that either real miracles can be wrought, or real predictions uttered, even by the permission of God, in favor of falsehood: for no permission, properly speaking, can be given to any being to do what he has not the natural power to effect; and permission in this case, to mean anything, must imply that God himself wrought the miracles, and gave the predictions, through the instrumentality of a

creature it is true, but in fact that he employed his Divine power in opposition to his own truth, - a dishonorable thought which cannot certainly be maintained. His permission may however extend to a license to evil men, and evil spirits too, to employ, against the truth and for the seduction of men, whatever natural power they possess. This is perfectly consistent with the general doctrine of Scripture; but this permission is granted under rule and limit. Thus the history of Job is highly

important, as it shows that evil spirits cannot employ their power against a good man without express permission. An event in the history of Jesus teaches also that they cannot destroy even an animal of the vilest kind, a swine, without the same license. Moral ends too were to be answered in both cases- teaching the doctrine of Providence to future generations by the example of Job; and punishing the Gadarenes in their property for their violation of the law through covetousness. So entirely

are these invisible opposers of the truth and plans of Christ under control; and as moral ends are so explicitly marked in these instances, they may be inferred as to every other, where permission to work evil or injury is granted. In the cases indeed before us, such moral purposes do not entirely rest upon inference; but are made evident from the history. The agency of Satan was permitted in support of idolatry in Egypt, only to make the triumph of the true God over idols more illustrious, and to justify

his severe judgments upon the Egyptians. The false prophets anticipated in Deuteronomy were permitted, as it is stated, in order "to prove the people." A new stance of trial was introduced, which would lead them to compare the pretended predictions of the false prophet with the illustrious sustained series of splendid miracles by which the Jewish economy had been established, - a comparison which could not fail to confirm rational and virtuous men in the truth, and to render more inexcusable those light and

vain persons who might be seduced. This observation may also be applied to the case of the false christs. In certain of these cases there is also something judicial. When men have yielded themselves so far to vice, as to seek error as its excuse, it seems a principle of the Divine government to make their sin their punishment. The Egyptians were besotted with their idolatries; they had rejected the clearest evidences of the truth, and were left to the delusions of the demons they worshipped, The Israelites,

in those parts of their history to which Moses refers, were passionately inclined to idolatry; they wished any pretence or sanction for it, and were ready to follow every seducer.

What they sought, they found, - occasions of going astray which would have had no effect upon them had their hearts been right with God. The Jews rejected a spiritual Messiah, with all the evidences of his mission; but were ready to follow any impostor who

promised them victory and dominion; they were disposed therefore to listen to every pretence, and to become the dupes of every illusion. But in no instance was the temptation either irresistible, or even strong, except as it was made so by their own violent inclinations to evil, and proneness to find pretences for it. In all the cases here supposed, the temptation to error was never present but in circumstances in which it was confronted with the infinitely higher evidence of truth, and that not merely in the number

or greatness of the miracles and predictions, but in the very nature of the "signs" themselves, - one being unquestionably miraculous, the other being at best strange and surprising, without a decided miraculous or prophetic character. The sudden and unperceived substitution of serpents for the rods of the magicians, might, if the matter had ended there, have neutralized the effect of the real transformation of Aaron's rod; but then the serpent of Moses swallowed up the others.

When frogs were already over all the land of Egypt, the imitation must have been confined to some spot purposely freed from them, and for that reason did not bear an unequivocal character; nor could the turning of water from a well into blood, (no difficult matter to pretend,) rival for an instant the conversion of the waters of the mighty Nile, and the innumerable channels and reservoirs fed by it, into that offensive substance. To these we are to add the miracles which followed, and which obliged even the

magicians to confess "the finge r of God." To the people whom the false prophet spoken of in Deuteronomy should attempt to lead astray from the LAW, all its magnificent evidences were known; the glory of God was then between the cherubim; the Urim and Thummim gave their responses; and the government was a standing miracle. To those who followed false christs, the evidences of the mission of Jesus were known; his unequivocal miracles, it is singular, were never denied

by those very Jews who, ever looking out for deception, cried as to the expected Christ, "Lo, he is here, and lo, he is there.'"

The "working of Satan," and the "lying wonders" mentioned in the Thessalonians, were to take place among a people, who not only had the words of Christ and his apostles, but acknowledged too their Divine authority as established by miracles and prophecies, the unequivocal character of which theirs never even pretended to equal. Thus,

in none of the instances adduced in the argument, was there any exposure to inevitable error, by any evidence in favor of falsehood; the evidence of the truth was in all these cases at hand, and presented itself under an obviously distinct and superior character. We conclude therefore that the objection to the conclusive nature of the proof of the truth of the Scriptures from miracles and prophecies grounded upon the supposed admission that miracles may be wrought and prophecies uttered in

favor of error, is not only without foundation, but that as far as Scriptural evidence goes on this subject, the demonstrative nature of real miracles and prophecies is, by what it really admits as to " the, working of Satan," abundantly confirmed. It does not admit that real miracles can be wrought, or real prophecies uttered; and it never supposes simulated ones, when opposed to revealed truth, but under circumstances in which they can be detected, or which give them an equivocal character, and in

which they may be compared with true miracles and predictions, so that none can be deceived by them but those who are violently bent on error and transgression.

(2) This subject is acutely and learnedly discussed in "An Answer to M. de Fontenelle's History of Oracles, translated from the French by a Priest of the Church of England."

(3) See note B at the end of the chapter.

Another objection to the conclusiveness of the proof

from miracles, is brought from the pretended heathen miracles of Aristeas, Pythagoras, Alexander of Pontus, Vespasian, and Apollonius Tyanseus, and from accounts of miracles in the Romish Church; but as this objection has been very feebly urged by the adversaries of Christianity, as though they themselves were ashamed of the argument, our notice of it shall be brief. For a full consideration of the objection we refer to the authors mentioned below. (4)

(4) MACKNIGHT'S Truth of the Gospel History; DOUGLAS'S Criterion; CAMPBELL on Miracles; and PALEY'S Evidences.

With respect to most of these pretended miracles, we may observe, that it was natural to expect that pretences to miraculous powers should be made under every form of religion, since the opinion of the earliest ages was in favor of the occurrence of such events; and as truth had been thus sanctioned, it is not surprising that error should attempt to

counterfeit its authority. But they are all deficient in evidence. Many of them indeed are absurd, and carry the air of fable; and as to others it is well observed by Dr. Macknight, (Truth of the Gospel History) that "they are vouched to us by no such testimony as can induce a prudent man to give them credit. They are not reported by any eye witnesses of them, nor by any persons on whom they were wrought, Those who relate them do not even pretend to have received them from eye witnesses;

we know them only by vague reports, the original of which no one can exactly trace. The miracles ascribed to Pythagoras were not reported until several hundred years after his death; and those of Apollonius, one hundred years after his death." Many instances which are given, especially among the papists, may be resolved into imagination; others, both popish and pagan, into the artifice of priests, who were of the ruling party, and therefore feared no punishment even upon detection; and in almost all

cases, we find that they were performed in favor of the dominant religion, and before persons whose religious prejudices were to be flattered and strengthened by them, and of course, persons very much disposed to become dupes. Bishop Douglas has laid down the following decisive and clear rules in his "Criterion," for trying miracles. That we may reasonably suspect any accounts of miracles to be false, if they are not published till long after the time when they are said to have been performed-or if

they Were not first published in the place where they are said to have been wrought-or if they probably were suffered to pass without examination, in the time, and at the place where they took their rise. These are general grounds of suspicion, to which may be added particular ones, arising from any circumstances which plainly indicate imposture and artifice on the one hand, or credulity and imagination on the other.

Before such tests, all pagan, popish, and other pretended miracles without exception, shrink: and they are not for a moment to be brought into comparison with works wrought publicly-in the sight of thousands, and those often opposers of the system to be established by them-works not by any ingenuity whatever to be resolved into artifice on the one part, or into the effects of imagination on the other-works performed before scholars, statesmen, rulers, persecutors; of which the instances are numerous,

and the places in which they occurred various-works published at the time, and on the very spot-works not in favor of a ruling system, but directed against every other religious establishment under heaven; and, for giving their testimony to which, the original witnesses had therefore to expect, and did in succession receive, reproach, stripes, imprisonment, and death.

It is also of importance to observe, that whatever those pretended miracles

might be, whether false or exaggerated relations, or artful impostures; or even were we to admit some of them to have been occurrences of an extraordinary and inexplicable kind, they are for the most part whether pagan or papal, a sort of insulated occurrences, which do not so much as profess to prove anything of common interest to the world. As they are destitute of convincing marks of credibility, so they have no inherent propriety, nor any perceptible connection with a design of

importance to mankind. But "the Scriptures of the Old Testament record a continued succession of wonderful works, connected also in a most remarkable manner with the system carried on from the fall of Adam to the coming of Christ. The very first promise of a Redeemer, who should bruise the serpent's head, appears to have been accompanied with a signal miracle, by which the nature of the serpent tribe was instantly changed, and reduced to a state of degradation and baseness,

expressive of the final overthrow of that evil spirit, through whose deceits man had fallen from his innocence and glory. The mark set upon Cain was probably some miraculous change in his external appearance, transmitted to his posterity, and serving as a memorial of the first, apostasy from the true religion. The general deluge was a signal instance of miraculous punishment inflicted upon the whole human race, when they had departed from the living God, and

were become utterly irreclaimable. The dispersion of Babel, and the confusion of tongues, indicated the Divine purpose of preventing an intermixture of idolaters and Atheists with the worship of the true God. The wonders wrought in Egypt, by the hand of Moses, were pointedly directed against the senseless and abominable idolatries of that devoted country, and were manifestly designed to expose their absurdity and falsehood, as well as to effect the deliverance of

God's people, Israel. The subsequent miracles in the desert, had an evident tendency to wean the Israelites from an attachment to the false deities of the surrounding nations, and to instruct them by figurative representations in that ' better covenant, established upon better promises,' of which the Mosaic institute was designed to be a shadow and a type. The settlement of the Israelites in Canaan under their leader Joshua, and their continuance in it for a long succession of

ages, were accompanied with a series of wonders, all operating to that one purpose of the Almighty, the separation of his people from a wicked and apostate world, and the preservation of a chosen seed, through whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed. Every miracle wrought under the Jewish theocracy, appears to have been intended, either to correct the superstitions and impieties of the neighboring nations, and to bring them to a conviction that the Lord Jehovah was the true God, and that

beside him there was none other; or to reclaim the Jews, whenever they betrayed a disposition to relapse into heathenish abominations, and to forsake that true religion which the Almighty was pledged to uphold throughout all ages, and for the completion of which he was then, in his infinite wisdom, arranging all human events

"In the miracles which our Lord performed, he not only evinced his Divine power, but fulfilled many important prophecies

relating to him as the Messiah. Thus they afforded a two-fold evidence of his authority. In several of them we perceive likewise a striking reference to the especial object of his mission. Continually did he apply these wonderful works to the purpose of inculcating and establishing doctrines, no less wonderful and interesting to the sons of men?

"The same may likewise be remarked of the miracles recorded of the apostles, after our Lord's departure

from this world, in none of which do we find anything done for mere ostentation; but an evident attention to the great purpose of the Gospel, that of ' turning men from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God.'

"It seems impossible for any thinking man to take such a view as this of the peculiar design and use of the Scripture miracles, and not to perceive in them the unerring counsels of infinite wisdom, as well as the undoubted exertions of infinite power. When we

see the several parts of this stupendous scheme thus harmonizing and co-operating for the attainment of one specific object, of the highest importance to the whole race of mankind; we cannot but be struck with a conviction of the absolute impossibility of imposture or enthusiasm, in any part of the proceeding. We are compelled to acknowledge, that they exhibit proofs of Divine agency, carried on in one continued series, such as no other system hath ever pretended to: such as not only surpasses

all human ingenuity, but seems impossible to have been effected by any combination of created beings." (VAN MILDERT'S Boyle Lectures.) On miracles therefore, like those which attest the mission of Moses and of Christ, we may safely rest the proof of the authority of both, and say to each of them, though with a due sense of the superiority of the "SON" to the "SERVANT," "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God, for no man can do these

miracles that thou doest, except GOD be with him."

Note A. - Page 158.

IN reply to the objection that "Moses describes the works of the magicians in the very same language as he does his own, and therefore that there is reason to conclude that they were equally miraculous," Dr. Farmer remarks, -

"1. That nothing is more common than to speak of professed jugglers, as doing what they pretend and appear to do, and that this

language never misleads, when we reflect what sort of men are spoken of, namely, mere impostors on the sight: why might not Moses then use the common popular language when speaking of the magicians, without any danger of misconstruction, inasmuch as the subject he was treating, all the circumstances of the narrative, and the opinion which the historian was known to entertain of the inefficacy and imposture of magic, did all concur to prevent mistakes?

"2. Moses does not affirm that there was a perfect conformity between his works and those of the magicians; he does not close the respective relations of his own particular miracles, with saying the magicians did that thing, or according to what he did, so did they, a form of speech used on this occasion no less than three times in one chapter, to describe the exact correspondence between the orders of God and the behavior of his servants; but makes choice of a word of great latitude, such as

does not necessarily express anything more than a general similitude, such as is consistent with a difference in many important respects, they did so or in like manner as he had.-That a perfect imitation could not be designed by this word, is evident from its being applied to cases in which such an imitation was absolutely impracticable: for, when Aaron had converted all the waters of Egypt into blood, we are told the magicians did so, that is, something in like sort. Nor can it be

supposed that they covered the land of Egypt with frogs, this had been done already; they could only appear to bring them over some small space cleared for the purpose. But what is more decisive, the word imports nothing more than their attempting some imitation of Moses, for it is used when they failed in their attempt: They did so to bring forth lice, but they could not.

"3. So far is Moses from ascribing the tricks of the magicians to the invocation and power of demons, or to

any superior beings whatever, that he does most expressly refer all they did or attempted in imitation of himself to human artifice and imposture. The original words, which are translated inchantments, (5) are entirely different from that rendered enchantments in other passages of Scripture, and do not carry in them any sort of reference to sorcery or magic, or the inter-position of any spiritual agents; they import deception and concealment, and ought to have been rendered secret

sleights or jugglings, and are thus translated even by those who adopt the common hypothesis with regard to the magicians. These secret sleights and jugglings are expressly referred to the magicians, not to the devil, who is not so much as mentioned in the history. Should we therefore be asked, (6) How it came to pass, in case the works of the magicians were performed by sleight of hand, that Moses has given no hint hereof? we answer, He has not contented himself with a hint of this kind, but, at

the same time that he ascribes his own miracles to Jehovah, he has, in the most direct terms resolved everything done in imitation of them entirely to the fraudulent contrivances of his opposers, to legerdemain or sleight of hand, in contradistinction from magical incantations. Moses therefore could not design to represent their works as real miracles, at the very time he was branding them as impostures.

(5) The original word used, Exod. 8:11, is Belahatehem; and that which occurs, ch. 7:22, and ch.

8:7, 18, is Belatehem; the former is probably derived from Lahat, which signifies to burn, and the substantive aflame or shining sword-blade, and is applied to the flaming sword which guarded the tree of life, Gen. 3:24. Those who formerly used legerdemain, dazzled and deceived the sight of spectators by the art of brandishing their swords, and sometimes seemed to

eat them, and to thrust them into their bodies; and the expression seems to intimate, that the magicians appearing to turn their rods into serpents, was owing to their eluding the eyes of the spectators by a dexterous management of their swords. In the preceding instances they made use of some different contrivance, for the latter word, belatehem, comes from Laat, to cover or hide, (which some think the former word also does,) and therefore fitly expresses any secret

artifices or methods of deception, whereby false appearances are imposed upon the spectators.

(6) As we are by Dr. Macknight, in his Truth of the Gospel History, p, 372.

"It remains only to show, that the works performed by the magicians did not exceed the cause to which they are ascribed; or in other words, the magicians proceeded no farther in imitation of Moses, than human artifice might enable them to go, (while the miracles of Moses were not liable to the same

impeachment, and bore upon themselves the plainest signatures of that Divine power to which they are referred.) If this can be proved, the interposition of the devil on this occasion will appear to be an hypothesis invented without any kind of necessity, as it certainly is without any authority from the sacred text.

"1. With regard to the first attempt of the magicians, the turning rods into serpents: it cannot be accounted extraordinary that they should seem to

succeed in it, when we consider that these men were famous for the art of dazzling and deceiving the sight; and that serpents, being first rendered tractable and harmless, as they easily may, have had a thousand different tricks played with them, to the astonishment of the spectators.

"2. With regard to the next attempt of the magicians to imitate Moses, who had already turned all the running and standing waters of Egypt into blood, there is no difficulty in

accounting for their success in the degree in which they succeeded. For it was during the continuance of this judgment, when no water could be procured but by digging round about the river, that the magicians attempted by some proper preparations to change the color of the small quantity that was brought them, (probably endeavoring to persuade Pharaoh that they could as easily have turned a larger quantity into blood.) In a case of this nature imposture might, and, as we learn from

history, often did take place. It is related by Valerius Maximus, (Lib. i, c. 6,) that the wine poured into the cup of Xerxes was three times changed into blood. But such trifling feats as these could not at all disparage the miracle of Moses; the vast extent of which raised it above the suspicion of fraud, and stamped upon every heart, that was not steeled against all conviction, the strongest impression of its divinity. For he turned their streams, rivers, ponds, and the water in all their receptacles, into blood.

And the fish that was in the river (Nile) died; and the river stank, Exod. 7:19-21.

"3. Pharaoh not yielding to this evidence, God proceeded to farther punishments, and covered the whole land of Egypt with frogs. (7) Before these frogs were removed, the magicians undertook to bring into some place cleared for the purpose a fresh supply; which they might easily do when there was such plenty everywhere at hand, Here also the narrow compass of the work exposed it to the

suspicion of being effected by human art; to which the miracle of Moses was not liable; the infinite number of frogs which filled the whole kingdom of Egypt, (so that their ovens, beds, and tables, swarmed with them,) being a proof of their immediate miraculous production. Beside, the magicians were unable to procure their removal; which was accomplished by Moses, at the submissive application of Pharaoh, and at the very time that Pharaoh himself chose, the more clearly to convince him that God was

the author of these miraculous judgments, and that their infliction or removal did not depend upon the influence of the elements or stars, at set times or in critical junctures, Exod. 8:8.

(7) Exod. 8:6-8. Nor, indeed, can it be imagined, that after this or the former plague had been removed, Pharaoh would order his magicians to renew either.

"4, The history of the last attempt of the magicians confirms the account here given of all their former ones. Moses turned all the

dust of the land into lice; and this plague, like the two preceding ones, being inflicted at the word of Moses, and extended over the whole kingdom of Egypt, must necessarily have been owing, not to human art, but to a Divine power. Nevertheless, the motives upon which the magicians at first engaged in the contest with Moses, the shame of desisting, and some slight appearances of success in their former attempts, prompted them still to carry on the imposture, and to try with their enchantments to

bring forth lice, but they could not.

With all their skill in magic, and with all their dexterity in deceiving the spectators, they could not even succeed so far as they had done in former instances, by producing a specious counterfeit of this work of Moses. Had they hitherto performed real miracles by the assistance of the devil, how came they to desist now? It cannot be a greater miracle to produce lice, than to turn rods into serpents, water into blood, and to create

frogs. It has, indeed, been very often said, that the devil was now laid under restraint: but hitherto no proof of this assertion has been produced, The Scripture is silent, ' both as to the devil being now restrained from interposing any farther in favor of the magicians, and as to his having afforded them his assistance on the former occasions. But if we agree with Moses in ascribing to the magicians nothing more than the artifice and dexterity which belonged to their profession; we shall find

that their want of success in their last attempt was owing to the different nature and circumstances of their enterprise."

NOTE B. - Page 166.

"But if at any time evil spirits, by their subtlety and experience, and knowledge of affairs in the world, did foretell things which accordingly came to pass, they were things that happened not long after, and commonly such as them, selves did excite and prompt men to. Thus, when the conspiracy against Cesar was come

just to be put into execution, and the devil had his agents concerned in it, he could foretell the time and place of his death. But it had been foretold to Pompey, Crassus, and Cesar himself before, as Tully informs us from his own knowledge, that they should all die in their beds, and in an honorable old age, who yet all died violent deaths.

Wise and observing men have sometimes been able to make strange predictions concerning the state of affairs; and

therefore spirits may be much more able to do it. Evil spirits could foretell what they were permitted to inflict or procure: they might have foretold the calamities of Job, or the death of Ahab at Ramoth-gilead.

"The devil could not always foretell what was to come to pass, and therefore his agents had need of their vaults and hollow statues, and other artifices to conceal their ignorance, and help them out when their arts of conjuration failed. But we have no

reason to think that the devil, who is so industrious to promote his evil ends, by all possible means, would omit such an opportunity as was given him by the opinion which the heathens had of their oracles; and the trials which Croesus and Trajan made are sufficient to prove that there was something supernatural and diabolical in them. Croesus sent to have many oracles consulted at a set time, and the question to be put to them was, what Croesus himself at that time was doing; and he resolved to

be employed about the most improbable thing that could be imagined, for he was boiling a tortoise and a lamb together in a brass pot; and yet the oracle of Delphi discovered to the messengers what the king was then about. Trajan, when he was going into Parthia, sent a blank paper sealed up, to an oracle of Assyria for an answer: the oracle returned him another blank paper, to show that it was not so to be imposed upon.

"But though things of present concernment were

discovered both to Croesus and Trajan beyond all human power to know, yet both were imposed upon by ambiguous answers, when they consulted about things future, of which the devil could not attain the knowledge.

"Many of the heathen priests themselves, upon examination, publicly confessed several of their oracles to be impostures, and discovered the whole contrivance and management of the deceit, which was entered upon record. And in the rest, the

power of the devil was always so limited and restrained, as to afford sufficient means to undeceive men, though many of his predictions might come to pass,"

"Many of the learned regard all the heathen oracles as the result of the grossest imposture. Some consider them as the work of evil spirits. Others are of opinion, that through these oracles some real prophecies were occasionally vouchsafed to the Gentile world, for their instruction and

consolation. But to whichsoever of these opinions we may incline, it will not be difficult to discover a radical difference between these and the Scripture prophecies.

"In the heathen oracles, we cannot discern any clear and unequivocal tokens of genuine prophecy. They were destitute of dignity and importance, had no connection with each other, tended to no object of general concern, and never looked into times remote from their own. We

read only of some few predictions and prognostications, scattered among the writings of poets and philosophers, most of which, beside being very weakly authenticated, appear to have been answers to questions of merely local, personal, and temporary concern, relating to the issue of affairs then actually in hand, and to events speedily to be determined. Far from attempting to form any chain of prophecies, respecting things far distant as to time or place, or matters

contrary to human probability, and requiring supernatural agency to effect them, the heathen priests and soothsayers did not even pretend to a systematic and connected plan. They hardly dared, indeed, to assume the prophetic character in its full force, but stood trembling, as it were, on the brink of futurity, conscious of their inability to venture beyond the depths of human conjecture. Hence their predictions became so fleeting, so futile, so uninteresting, that they

were never collected together as worthy of preservation, but soon fell into disrepute and almost total oblivion.

"The Scripture prophecies, on the other hand, constitute a series of predictions, relating principally to one grand object, of universal importance, the work of man's redemption, and carried on in regular progression through the Patriarchal, Jewish, and Christian dispensations, with a harmony and uniformity of design,

clearly indicating one and the same Divine Author, who alone could say,' Remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is none else: I am God, and there is none like me; declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.'

The genuine prophets of the Almighty beheld these things with a clear and steadfast eye; they declared them with authority and

confidence; and they gave, moreover, signs from heaven for the conviction of others. Accordingly their writings have been handed down from age to age; have been preserved with scrupulous fidelity; and have ever been regarded with reverence, from the many incontestable evidences of their accomplishments, and from their inseparable connection with the religious hopes sad expectations of mankind." (Bishop of Llandaff.)

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17 PROPHECIES OF SCRIPTURE

The nature and force of the argument from prophecy have been already stated; (Vide chap, ix;) and it has been proved, that where real predictions are uttered, - not happy conjectures which shrewd and observing men may sometimes make, but predictions which imply foresight of events dependent upon the various contingencies of human affairs, and a knowledge of the

characters, dispositions, and actions of persons yet unborn, so as to decide unerringly on the conduct which they will pursue-they can only be uttered by inspired men, and the author of such communications can be no other than the infinite and omniscient God, "showing to his servants the things which shall be hereafter" in order to authenticate their mission, and to affix the stamp of his own infallible authority upon their doctrine.

The authenticity and the antiquity of the records which contain these predictions, have been already established; and the only subject of inquiry proper to this chapter is, the prophetic character of the predictions said to be contained in the Old and New Testaments. A few general observations may however be previously allowed.

1. The instances to be considered by those who would fully satisfy themselves on this point are not few but many. The

believer in the Divine authority of the Old and New Testaments, is ready to offer for examination great numbers of professed prophecies relative to individuals, cities, states, the person and offices of Messiah, and the Christian Church, which he alleges to have been unequivocally fulfilled; independent of predictions which he believes to be now fulfilling; or which are hereafter to be fulfilled in the world,

2. If as to the fulfillment of some particular

prophecies, the opinions of men should differ, there is an abundance of others, the accomplishment of which has been so evident as to defy any rational interpretation which will not involve their fulfillment; while unbelievers are challenged to show any clear prediction of Holy Scripture which has been falsified by the event throughout the whole range of those ages which are comprehended by the Bible, from the Pentateuch to the Apocalypse.

3. The predictions in Scripture have already been distinguished in their character from the oracles and divinations of the heathen; (Vide chap, xvi;) and it may here be farther observed, that they are not, generally, separate and insulated predictions of the future, arising out of accidental circumstances, and connecting themselves with merely individual interests and temporary occasions. On the contrary, they chiefly relate to, and arise out of a grand scheme for the moral recovery of the human race from

ignorance, vice, and wretchedness. They speak of the agents to be employed in it, and especially of the great agent, the REDEEMER himself; and of those mighty and awful proceedings of Providence as to the nations of the earth, by which judgment and mercy are exercised with reference both to the ordinary principles of moral government, and especially to this restoring economy, to its struggles, its oppositions, and its triumphs. They all meet in CHRIST, as in their proper

center, and in him only, however many of the single lines, when considered apart, may be imagined to have another direction, and though they may pass through intermediate events. "If we look," says Bishop Hurd, "into the prophetic writings, we find that prophecy is of a prodigious extent; that it commenced from the fall of man, and reaches to the consummation of all things; that for many ages it was delivered darkly, to a few persons, and with large intervals from the date of one prophecy to that of

another; but at length became more clear, more frequent, and was uniformly carried on in the line of one people, separated from the rest of the world-among other reasons assigned, for this principally, to be the repository of the Divine Oracles; that, with some intermission, the spirit of prophecy subsisted among that people to the coming of Christ, that he himself, and his apostles, exercised this power in the most conspicuous manner; and left behind them many predictions recorded in the

books of the New Testament, which profess to respect very distant events, and even run out to the end of time, or in St. John's expression, to that period,' when the mystery of God shall be perfected,' Farther, beside the extent of this prophetic scheme, the dignity of the person whom it concerns, deserves our consideration. He is described in terms which excite the most august and magnificent ideas.

He is spoken of, indeed, sometimes as being the seed of the woman, and as

the Son of man; yet so as being at the same time of more than mortal extraction. He is even represented to us as being superior to men and angels; as far above all principality and power; above all that is accounted great, whether in heaven or in earth; as the Word and Wisdom of God; as the eternal Son of the Father; as the Heir of all things, by whom he made the worlds; as the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person. We have no words to denote greater ideas than these:

the mind of man cannot elevate itself to nobler conceptions. Of such transcendent worth and excellence is that Jesus said to be, to whom all the prophets bear witness!

"Lastly, the declared purpose for which the Messiah, prefigured by so long a train of prophecy, came into the world, corresponds to all the rest of the representation. It was not to deliver an oppressed nation from civil tyranny, or to erect a great civil empire, that is, to achieve one of those acts

which history accounts most heroic. No: it was not a. mighty state, a victor people-Non res Romanae perituraque regna-

that was worthy to enter into the contemplation of this Divine person. It was another, and far sublimer purpose which he came to accomplish; a purpose, in comparison of which all our policies are poor and little, and all the performances of man as nothing. It was to deliver a world from ruin; to abolish sin and death; to purify and immortalize human

nature; and thus, in the most exalted sense of the words, to be the Savior of men and the blessing of all nations. There is no exaggeration in this account. I deliver the undoubted sense, if not always the very words of Scripture. Consider then to what this representation amounts. Let us unite the several parts of it, and bring them to a point. A spirit of prophecy pervading all time-characterizing one person, of the highest dignity-and proclaiming the accomplishment of one

purpose, the most beneficent, the most Divine, the imagination itself can project. Such is the Scriptural delineation, whether we will receive it or no, of that economy which we call prophetic."

4. Prophecy, in this peculiar sense, and on this ample scale, is peculiar to the religious system of the Holy Scriptures. Nothing like it is found anywhere beside; and it accords perfectly with that system, that nothing similar should be found elsewhere. "The prophecies of Scripture,"

says that accomplished scholar, Sir W. Jones, "bear no resemblance in form or style to any that can be produced from the stores of Grecian, Indian, Persian, or even Arabian learning. The antiquity of those compositions, no man of learning doubts; and the unrestrained application of them to events long subsequent to their publication, is a solid ground of belief that they were genuine predictions, and consequently inspired." The advantage of this species of evidence belongs then exclusively to

our revelation. Heathenism never made any clear and well-founded pretensions to it. Mohammedanism, though it stands itself as a proof of the truth of Scripture prophecy, is unsupported by a single prediction of its own. "To the Christian only belongs this testimony of his faith; this growing evidence gathering strength by length of time, and affording, from age to age, fresh proofs of its Divine origin. As a majestic river expands itself more and more the farther it removes from its source, so

prophecy, issuing from the first promise in paradise as its fountain head, acquired additional strength and fullness as it rolled down successive ages, and will still go on increasing in extent and grandeur, until it shall finally lose itself in the ocean of eternity."

5. The objection which has been raised to Scripture prophecy from its supposed obscurity, has no solid foundation. There is, it is true, a prophetic language of symbol and emblem; but it is a language which is definite

and not equivocal in its meaning, and as easily mastered as the language of poetry, by attentive persons. This, however, is not always used. The style of the prophecies of Scripture very often differs in nothing from the ordinary style of the Hebrew poets; and, in not a few cases, and those too on which the Christian builds most in the argument, it sinks into the plainness of historical narrative. Some degree of obscurity is essential to prophecy: for the end of it was not to gratify human curiosity, by

a detail of future events and circumstances; and too great clearness and specialty might have led to many artful attempts to fulfill the predictions, and so far the evidence of their accomplishment would have been weakened. The two great ends of prophecy are, to excite expectation before the event, and then to confirm the truth by a striking and unequivocal fulfillment; and it is a sufficient answer to the allegation of the obscurity of the prophecies of Scripture, that they have abundantly accomplished

those objects, among the most intelligent and investigating, as well as among the simple and unlearned in all ages. It cannot be denied, for instance, leaving out particular cases which might be given, that by means of these prediction the expectation of the incarnation and appearance of a Divine Restorer was kept up among the people to whom they were given, and spread even to the neighboring nations; that as these prophecies multiplied, the hope

became more intense; and that at the time of our Lord's coming, the expectation of the birth of a very extraordinary person prevailed, not only among the Jews, but among other nations. This purpose was then sufficiently answered, and an answer is given to the objection. In like manner prophecy serves as the basis of our hope in things yet to come; in the final triumph of truth and righteousness on earth, the universal establishment of the kingdom of our Lord, and the rewards of eternal life to be bestowed at his

second appearing. In these all true Christians agree; and their hope could not have been so uniformly supported in all ages, and under all circumstances, had not the prophecies and predictive promises conveyed with sufficient clearness the general knowledge of the good for which they looked, though many of its particulars be unrevealed. The second end of prophecy is, to confirm the truth by the subsequent event; and here the question of the actual fulfillment of Scripture prophecy is involved, to

which we shall immediately advert.

We only now observe, that it is no argument against the unequivocal fulfillment of several prophecies, that many have doubted or denied what the believers in revelation have on this subject so strenuously contended for. How few of mankind have read the Scriptures with serious attention, or been at the pains to compare their prophecies with the statements in history! How few, especially of the objectors to the Bible, have

read it in this manner! How many of them have confessed, un-blushingly, their unacquaintance with its contents, or have proved what they have not confessed by the mistakes and misrepresentations into which they have fallen. As for the Jews, the evident dominion of their prejudices; their general averseness to discussion; and the extravagant principles of interpretation they have adopted for many ages, which set all sober criticism at defiance, render nugatory any authority which might be

ascribed to their denial of the fulfillment of certain prophecies in the sense adopted by Christians. We may add to this, that among Christian critics themselves there may be much disagreement. Eccentricities and absurdities are found among the learned in every department of knowledge, and much of this waywardness, and affectation of singularity has infected interpreters of Scripture. But, alter all, there is a truth and reason in every subject which the understandings of the

generality of men will apprehend and acknowledge, whenever it is fully understood and impartially considered; to this, in all such cases, the appeal can only be made, and here it may be made with confidence.

6. For want of a right apprehension of the meaning of somewhat an unfortunate term which has obtained in theology, the "double sense" of many prophecies, an objection of another kind has been raised, as though no definite meaning could be

assigned to the prophecies of Scripture.

Nothing can be more unfounded. "The double sense of many prophecies in the Old Testament,"

says an able writer, "has been made a pretext by ill-disposed men, for representing them as of uncertain meaning, and resembling the ambiguity of the pagan oracles. But whoever considers the subject with due attention, will perceive how little ground there is for such an accusation.

The equivocations of the heathen oracles manifestly arose from their ignorance of future events, and from their endeavors to conceal that ignorance, by such indefinite expressions, as might be equally applicable to two or more events of a contrary description. But the double sense of the Scripture prophecies, far from originating in any doubt or uncertainty, as to the fulfillment of them in either sense, springs from a foreknowledge of their accomplishment in both; whence the prediction is purposely so framed as to

include both events, which, so far from being contrary to each other, are typical the one of the other, and are thus connected together by a mutual dependency or relation. This has often been satisfactorily proved, with respect to those prophecies which referred, in their primary sense, to the events, of the Old Testament, and, in their farther and more complex signification, to those of the New: and on this double accomplishment of some prophecies is grounded our firm

expectation of the completion of others which remain yet unfulfilled in their secondary sense, but which we justly consider as equally certain in their issue, as those which are already past. So far, then, from any valid objection lying against the credibility of the Scripture prophecies, from these seeming ambiguities of meaning, we may urge them as additional proofs of their coming from God. For, who but the Being, who is infinite in knowledge and in counsel, could so construct predictions as to

give them a two-fold application, to events distant from, and (to human foresight) unconnected with, each other? What power less than Divine could so frame them, as to make the accomplishment of them, in one instance, a solemn pledge and assurance of their completion in another instance, of still higher and more universal importance? Where will the scoffer find anything like this in the artifices of heathen oracles, to conceal their ignorance, and to

impose on the credulity of mankind?"

We now proceed to the enumeration of a few out of the great number of predictions contained in the Scriptures, which most unequivocally show a perfect knowledge of future contingent events, and which, therefore, according to our argument, as certainly prove that they who uttered them "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," by the Spirit of the omniscient and infinitely prescient GOD. (8)

(8) "The correspondences of types and antitypes, though they are not proper proofs of the truth of a doctrine, yet may be very reasonable confirmations of the foreknowledge of God; of the uniform view of Providence under different dispensations; of the analogy, harmony, and agreement, between the Old Testament and the New. The words of the law concerning one particular kind of death, He that is hanged is accursed of God, can hardly be conceived to have been put in on any other account, than with a

view and foresight to the application made of it by St. Paul. The analogies between the paschal lamb and the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world; between the Egyptian bondage and the tyranny of sin; between the baptism of the Israelites in the sea and in the cloud, and the baptism of Christians; between the passage through the wilderness, and through the present world; between Joshua bringing the people into the promised land, and Jesus Christ being the Captain of salvation to

believers; between the Sabbath of rest promised to the people of God in the earthly Canaan, and the eternal rest promised to the people of God in the heavenly Canaan; between the liberty granted them from the time of the death of the high priest, to him that had fled into a city of refuge, and the redemption purchased by the death of Christ; between the high priest entering into the holy place every year with the blood of others, and Christ's once entering with his own blood into heaven itself, to appear in the

shadows of things to come, of good things to come, the shadows of heavenly things, the presence of God for us. These, I say, and innumerable other analogies, between the figures for the time then present, patterns of things in the heavens, and the heavenly things themselves, cannot without the force of strong prejudice be conceived to have happened by mere chance, without any foresight or design. There are no such analogies, much less such series of analogies, found in the

books of more enthusiastic writers living in such remote ages from each other. It is much more credible and reasonable to suppose, what St. Paul affirms, that these things were our examples; and that in that uniform course of God's government of the world, all things happened unto them of old for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. And hence arises that aptness of similitude, in the application of several legal performances to the

morality of the Gospel, that it can very hardly be supposed not to have been originally intended." (Dr. S. Clarke's Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion, p. 263.) The very first promise made to man is a prediction which none could have uttered but He whose eye looks through the depths of future ages, and knows the result as well as the beginning of all things. "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shall bruise his heel" In

vain is it attempted to resolve the whole of the transaction with which this prediction stands connected, into allegory. Such criticism, if applied to any other ancient historical book, bearing marks of authentic narration as unequivocal as the book of Genesis, would not be tolerated by the advocates of this absurd conception themselves, whether they are open or disguised infidels. In vain is it alleged, that a mere fact of natural history is stated: for if the words are understood to express no

more than the enmity between the human race and serpents, it would require to be proved, in order to establish a special punishment of the serpent, that man has a greater hostility to serpents than to other dangerous animals, which he extirpates whenever he can master them by force or stratagem; and that serpents have a stronger disposition to do injury to men, than to those animals which they make their daily prey, or to others which they never fail to strike when within their reach. As this was

obviously false in fact, Moses could not assert it; and, if it had been true in natural history, to have said this and nothing more, to have confined himself to the mere literal fact, a fact of no importance, would have been far below the character of Moses as a writer-a lofty and sublime character, to which the heathens and sometimes infidels themselves have done justice. In no intelligible sense can these celebrated words be understood, but in that in which they are fixed by innumerable references

and allusions of other parts of the sacred volume, and which ought, in all good criticism, to determine their meaning. The serpent, and the seed of the woman, are the representatives of two invisible and mighty powers; the one good, the other evil; the one Divine, though incarnate of the woman, the other diabolic; between whom an enmity was placed, which was to express itself in a long and fearful struggle, in the course of which the seed of the woman should sustain a temporary wound and

suffering, but which should issue in the bruising of the head, the inflicting a fatal blow upon the power, of his adversary. The scene of this contest was to be our globe, and generally the visible agents of it men, under their respective leaders, the serpent on the one side, and the seed of the woman on the other, practicing, and advocating, and endeavoring to render dominant truth or error, virtue or vice, obedience to God or rebellion against his authority. We ask then, has such a contest of principles and powers taken place in

the world, or not? The answer must be in the affirmative; for every age bears witness to it. We see it commencing in Cain and Abel-in the resistance of the antediluvians to the righteousness taught by Noah;- in their punishment;- in the rise of idolatry, and the struggles of the truth in opposition to it;- in the inflictions of singular judgments upon nations, for the punishment and exposure of idolatry, as in the plagues of Egypt, the destruction of the nations of Canaan, &c. We trace the

contest throughout the whole history of the Jewish nation down to the coming of our Lord; and occasionally we see it extending into the neighboring pagan nations, although they were generally, as a part of their punishment, "suffered to walk in their own ways," and Satan as to them was permitted to "keep his goods in peace" till the time of gracious visitation should arrive. We see the incarnate Redeemer, for a time suffering, and at length dying. Then was "the hour and power of

darkness;" then was his heel bruised: but he died only to revive again, more visibly and powerfully to establish his kingdom and to commence his spiritual conquests. In every direction were the regions, where Satan "had his seat" penetrated by the heavenly light of the doctrine of Christ; and everywhere the most tremendous persecutions were excited against its unarmed and unprotected preachers and their converts. But the gates of hell prevailed not against the Church founded on a rock, and

"Satan fell as lightning from heaven," - from the thrones, and temples, and judgment seats, and schools of the ancient civilized world; the idolatry of ages was renounced; Christ was adored through the vast extent of the Roman empire, and in many of the countries beyond even its ample sweep. Under other forms the enemy revived, and the contest was renewed; but in every age it has been maintained. The principles of pure evangelical truth were never extinguished; and the "children of the

kingdom" were "minished and brought low," only to render the renewal of the assault by unexpected agents, singularly raised up, more marked and more eminently of God. We need not run over even the heads of the history of the Church: what is the present state of things? The contest still continues, but with increasing zeal on the part of Christians, who are carrying on offensive operations against the most distant parts of the long-undisturbed kingdom of darkness; placing there the principles of truth;

commencing war upon idolatry and superstition; and establishing the institutions of the Christian Church with a success which warrants the hope that the time is not far distant, when the "head of the serpent will be bruised" in all idolatrous countries, and the idols of modern heathen states, like those of old, be displaced, to introduce the worship of the universal Savior,

"GOD over all, blessed forever"

May we not ask, whether all this was not infinitely

above human foresight? Who could confidently state that a contest of this peculiar nature would continue through successive ages; that men would not all go over to one or other of the opposing parties; nay, who could confidently conjecture in the age of Moses, (when the tendency to idolatry had become so strong, that the chosen seed themselves, under the constant demonstration of miracles, visibly blessed while they remained faithful to the worship of God, and as eminently and

visibly punished when they departed from it, could not be preserved from the infection,) that idolatry should one day be abolished throughout the earth? Past experience and all probabilities were opposed to the hope that the cause of the seed of the woman should prevail, and yet it stands recorded, "it [rather HE,] shall bruise thy head." Infidels may scoff at a Redeemer, and deride the notion of a tempter; but they cannot deny that such a contest between opposite parties and principles as is here

foretold has actually taken place, and still continues; that contest, so extended, so continued, and so terminated, human foresight could not foretell; and the fact established, therefore, is an accomplishment of a prophecy, which could originate only in Divine prescience.

The celebrated prediction of Jacob at the close of his life respecting the time of the appearing of

"SHILOH," may next be considered.

The word signifies, "He who is to be sent" or "The Peace-maker,' In either sense, the application to that great Person, to whom all the patriarchs looked forward, and the prophets gave witness, is obvious, Those who doubt this, are bound to give us a better interpretation. - Before a certain event, a certain person was to come, to whom the people should be gathered. The event has certainly arrived, but who is the person? The application of the prophecy to Messiah is not an invention of Christians.

The ancient Jews, as appears from their commentators, so understood it: and the modern ones are unable to resist the evidence drawn from it, in favor of the claims of our Lord. That it is a prediction, is proved from its form, and the circumstances under which it was delivered; that it has received a singular accomplishment in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, is also certain; and it is equally certain, that no individual beside can be produced, in whom it has been in any sense

whatever accomplished. For the ample illustration of the prophecy the reader is referred to commentators, and to Bishop Newton's well-known work on the prophecies. It is sufficient here to allege, that Judah, as a tribe, remained till after the advent of Jesus Christ, which cannot be said of the long-dispersed ten tribes, and scarcely of Benjamin, which was merged in the tribe of Judah.-CHUBB asks where the supremacy of Judah was, when Nebuchadnezzar carried the whole nation

captive to Babylon; when Alexander subdued Palestine; and when it was a tributary province to the Roman empire? The prediction, however, does not convey the idea either of independent or supreme power. This no one tribe had when all were united in one state, and each had its scepter and its princes or chiefs. It is therefore enough to show, that under all its various fortunes, the tribe of Judah retained its ensigns, and its chiefs, and its tribeship, until Shiloh came. It is no uncommon thing for a country to be

conquered, and for its ancient princes and government to remain, though as tributary.

With respect to the tribe of Judah during the captivity in Babylon, Cyrus, as we learn from Ezra 1:8, ordered the vessels of the temple to be restored to the prince of Judah." This shows that the tribe was kept distinct, and that it had its own internal government and chief. Under the dominion of the Asmonean kings, the Jews had their rulers, their elders, and their council,

and so under the Romans. But soon after the death of Christ, all this was abolished, the nation dispersed, and the tribes utterly confounded. Till our Lord came, and had accomplished his work on earth, the tribe of Judah continued. This is matter of unquestionable historic fact. In a short time afterward it was dispersed and mingled with the common mass of Jews of all tribes and countries: this is equally unquestionable. Now again we ask, could either human foresight determine this, or

is the application of the event to the prophecy fanciful? The prediction was uttered in the very infancy of the state of Israel, by the father of the fathers of the tribes of that people. Ages passed away; the mightiest empires were annihilated; ten of the chosen tribes themselves were utterly dispersed into unknown countries; another became so insignificant as to lose its designation; one only remained which imposed its very name upon the nation at large, the object of public observation until

the Messiah came, and that tribe was Judah, the tribe spoken of in the prediction, and it remained as it were only to make the fulfillment manifest, and was then confounded with the relics of the rest. What prescience of countless contingencies, occurring in the intervening ages, does this imply?-A prescience truly, which can only belong to God.

The predictions respecting the Jewish nation, commencing with those of Moses, and running through all their prophets,

are too numerous to be adduced. One of the most instructive and convincing exercises to those who have any doubt of the inspiration of the Scriptures, would be, seriously and candidly to peruse them, and by the aid of those authors who have expressly and largely written on this subject, to compare the prophecies with their alleged fulfillment. Three topics are prominent in the predictions of Moses and the prophets generally, - the frequent and gross departures of the Jews

from their own law; their signal punishment in invasions, captivities, dispersions, oppressions, and persecutions; and their final restoration to their own land. All these have taken place. Even the last was accomplished by the return from Babylon, though, in its eminent sense, it is still future. In pursuance of the argument, we shall show, that each of these was above human foresight and conjecture.

The apostasies and idolatries of this people were foretold by Moses

before his death. "I know that after my death ye will utterly corrupt yourselves, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you, and evil will befall you in the latter days" Deut. 31:29; and he accordingly prophetically declares their punishment. It is, perhaps, scarcely possible to fix upon a stronger circumstance than this prediction, to prove that Moses was truly commissioned by God, and did not pretend a Divine sanction in order to give weight to his laws and to his personal authority.

The rebellious race whom he had first led into the desert, had died there; and the new generation was much more disposed to obey their leader. At the moment he wrote these words, appearances had a favorable aspect on the future obedience of the people. If this had not been the case, the last thought a merely political man would have been disposed to indulge was, that his own favorite institutions should fall into desuetude and contempt; and much less would he finish his public life by openly telling the

people that he foresaw that event, even if he feared it. It may, indeed, be said, that he uttered this conviction for the purpose of giving a color to the threatenings which he pronounces against disobedience to his law, and that the object of those fearful menaces was to deter the people from departing from customs and rules which he was anxious, for the sake of his own fame, that they should observe. To this we answer, that Moses could not expect any weight to be attached by the Israelites to

his threat, that the Divine judgments would be inflicted upon them for not obeying his laws, unless their former rebellions had been immediately and signally marked by such visitations. Without this to support him, he would have appeared in a ridiculous, rather than in an impressive and sublime attitude before the people assembled to hear his last commands. For forty years his institutions had been often disobeyed, and if no inflictions of the Divine displeasure followed, what reason had they to credit

the menaces of Moses as to the future? But if such inflictions had resulted from their disobedience, everything is rational and consistent in this part of the conduct of their leader. Let the infidel choose which of these positions he pleases. If he think that Moses aimed to deter them from departing from his institutions by empty threats, he ascribes an incredible absurdity to an unquestionably wise, and, as infidels themselves contend, a very politic man; but if his predictive threats were grounded

upon former marked and acknowledged interpositions of Divine Providence, the only circumstance which could give them weight, he was God's commissioned leader, and, as he professed, an inspired prophet.

It is a circumstance of great weight in the predictions of Moses respecting the punishment of the Jews, that these famines, pestilences, invasions, subjugations to foreign enemies, captivities, &c, are represented solely as

the consequences of their vicious departures from God, and from his laws. Now, who could foresee, except an inspired man, that such evils would in no instance take place, - that no famine, no blight, no invasion would occur in Judea, except in obvious punishment of their offences against their law? What was there in the common course of things to prevent a small state, though observant of the precepts of its own religion, from falling under the dominion of more powerful neighboring nations,

except the special protection of God? and what but this could guard them from the plagues and famines to which their neighbors were liable? If the predictions of Moses were not inspired, they assume a principle which mere human wisdom and policy never takes into its calculations, - that of the connection of the national prosperity of a people, inseparably and infallibly, with obedience to their holy writings; and because they assume that singular principle, the conclusion is in favor of their

inspiration. For let us turn to the facts of the case, The sacred books of the Jews are historical as well as prophetic.

The history too is distinct from the prophecy; it is often written by other authors; and there is no mark at all of any designed accommodation of the one to the other. The singular simplicity of the historic narrative disproves this, as well as the circumstance, that a great part of it as recorded in the Old Testament is a transcript of their public records.

Consult then this history, and in every instance of singular calamity we see a previous departure from the law of Moses; the one following the other, almost with the regularity and certainty of natural effects and causes! In this the predictions of Moses and the prophets are strikingly accomplished; and a more than human foresight is proved.

Let us look farther into the detail of these threatened punishments. Beside the ordinary inflictions of failing harvests, and severe

diseases, in their own country, they were, according to the prophecies of Moses, Deut. 28, to be "scattered among all people, from the one end of the earth even to the other;" and where is the trading nation in which they are not, in Asia, Africa, and Europe? Many are even to be found in the West Indies, and in the commercial parts of America.

Who could foresee this but God; especially when their singular preservation as a distinct people, a solitary

instance in the history of nations, is also implied? (9) They were to find "no ease" among these nations; and the almost constant and long-continued persecutions, robberies, and murder of Jews, not only in ancient nations, but especially among Christian nations of the middle ages, and in the Mohammedan states to this day, are in wonderful accomplishment of this. They were to be "a proverb and a bye-word among all nations" which has been in every place fulfilled, but was surely

above human intelligence to foresee; and "the stranger that is within thee shall get above the very high, and thou shall come very low" For a comment on this, let the conduct of the

"stranger," Turks and others, who inhabit Palestine, toward the Jews who remain there, be recollected, - the one party is indeed "very high," and he other "very low" Other parts of this singular chapter present equally striking predictions, uttered more than three

thousand years ago, as remarkably accomplished; but there are some passages in it, which refer in terms so particular to a then distant event, the utter subversion of their polity and nation by the Romans, as to demonstrate in the most unequivocal manner the prescience of Him to whom all events, the most contingent, minute, and distant, are known with absolute certainty, That the Romans are intended, in verse 49, by the nation brought from "the end of the earth" distinguished by their well-

known ensign the eagle" and by their fierce and cruel disposition, is exceedingly probable: and it is remarkable, that the account which Moses gives of the horrors of the "siege" of which he speaks, is exactly paralleled by those well- known passages in Josephus, in which he describes the siege of Jerusalem by the Roman army. The last verse of the chapter seems indeed to fix the reference of the foregoing passages to the final destruction of the nation by the Romans, and at the same time contains a

prediction, the accomplishment of which cannot possibly be ascribed to accident. "And the Lord shall bring thee into Egypt again with ships, by the way whereof I spake unto thee, Thou shall see it no more again: and there ye shall be sold unto your enemies for bondmen and bondwomen, and no man shall buy you" On this Dr. Hales remarks, on the authority of their own national historian, Josephus, "Of the captives taken at the siege of Jerusalem, above seventeen years of age,

some were sent to Egypt in chains, the greater part were distributed through the provinces to be destroyed in the theatres, by the sword, and by wild beasts; the rest under seventeen were sold for slaves, and that for a trifling sum, on account of the numbers to be sold, and the scarcity of buyers: so that at length the prophecy of Moses was fulfilled-' and no man shall buy.' The part that were reserved to grace the triumph of Vespasian, were probably transported to Italy in ' ships' or by sea, to

avoid a prodigious land journey thither through Asia and Greece, - a circumstance which distinguished this invasion and captivity from the preceding by the Assyrians and Babylonians. In the ensuing rebellion, a part of the captives were sent by sea to Egypt, and several of the ships were wrecked on the coast."

(9) "They have been dispersed among all countries, They have no common tie of locality or government to keep them together. All the ordinary

principles' of assimilation, which make law, and religion, and manners, so much a matter of geography, are in their instance suspended. And in exception to everything which history has recorded of the revolutions of the species, we see in this wonderful race a vigorous principle of identity, which has remained in undiminished, force for nearly two thousand years, and still pervades every shred and fragment of their widely scattered population" (CHALMERS'S Evidences.)

Thus, at a distance of fifteen centuries, were these contingent circumstances accurately recorded by the prophetic spirit of Moses-the taking of innumerable Jews captive-their transport to Egypt-their being sold till the markets for slaves were glutted, and no more buyers were found, and embarked on board vessels, either to grace the triumph of their conqueror, or to find a market in different maritime ports. Is it possible that these numerous and minute circumstances can be

referred to either happy conjectures or human foresight?

But Moses and other prophets agree that, after all their captivities and dispersions, the Jews shall be again restored to their own land. This was, as we have said, in one instance accomplished in their restoration by Cyrus and his successors; after which they again became a considerable state.

But who could foretell that, but HE who determines the events of the world by his power and wisdom?

Jeremiah fixes the duration of the captivity to seventy years; he did that so unequivocally, that the Jews in Babylon, when the time approached, began to prepare for the event. But there was nothing in the circumstances of the Babylonian empire when the prediction was uttered, to warrant the hope, much less to support a confident conjecture. Could the subversion of that powerful empire by a then obscure people, the circumstance which broke the bondage of the Jews, have been foreseen by man? or when

we consider the event as fulfilling so distinct a prophecy, can it be resolved into imaginative interpretation? A future restoration however awaits this people, and will be to the world a glorious demonstration of the truth of prophecy. This being future, we cannot argue upon it. Three things are however certain:- the Jews themselves expect it; they are preserved by the providence of God a distinct people for their country; and their country, which in fact is possessed

by no one, is preserved for them.

Without noticing numerous prophecies respecting ancient nations and cities, (1) the wonderful and exact accomplishment of which has been pointed out by various writers, and which afford numerous eminent instances of the prescience of contingent and improbable events, whose evidence is so overwhelming, that, as in the case of the illustrious prophecies of Daniel, unbelievers have been

obliged to resort to the subterfuge of asserting, in opposition to the most direct proofs, that the prophecies were written after the events, we shall close our instances by adverting to the prophecies respecting the Messiah, - the great end and object of the prophetic dispensation. Of these not a solitary instance, or two, of an equivocal kind, and expressed only in figurative or symbolic language, are to be adduced; but upward of one hundred predictions, generally of very clear and explicit

meaning, and each referring to some different circumstance connected with the appearing of Christ, his person, history, and his ministry, have been selected by divines, exclusive of typical and allusive predictions, (2) and those which in an ultimate and remote sense are believed to terminate in him. How are all these to be disposed of, if the inspiration of the Scriptures which contain them be denied? That these predictions are in books written many ages before the birth of our Savior, is

certain-the testimony of the Jews, who reject Christ, amply proves this. That no interpolations have taken place to accommodate them to him, is proved, by the same predictions being found in the copies which are in the hands of the Jews, and which have descended to them from before the Christian era. On the other hand, the history of Jesus answers to these predictions, and exhibits their exact accomplishment. The Messiah was to be of the seed of David-born in Bethlehem-born of a

virgin-an incarnation of Deity, God with us, - an eminent but unsuccessful teacher;- he was to open the eyes of the blind, heal the lame and sick, and raise the dead-he was to be despised and rejected by his own countrymen; to be arraigned on false charges, denied justice, and condemned to a violent death-he was to rise from the dead, ascend to the right hand of God, and there being invested with power and authority, he was to punish his enemies, and establish his own spiritual kingdom, which

shall never end. We do not enter into more minute predictions, for the argument is irresistible when founded on these alone: and we may assert that no man, or number of men, could possibly have made such conjectures. Considered in themselves, this is impossible. What rational man, or number of rational men, could now be found to hazard a conjecture that an incarnation of Deity would occur in any given place and time-that this Divine Person should teach wisdom, work miracles, be

unjustly put to death, rise again, and establish his religion? These are thoughts which never enter into the minds of men, because they are suggested by no experience, and by no probability arising out of the usual course of human affairs; and yet if the prophets were not inspired,, it would have been as impossible for them to have conceived such expectations, as for us; and indeed much more so, seeing we are now familiar with a religion which asserts that such events have once occurred.

If then such events lay beyond not only human foresight, but even human thought, they can only be referred to inspiration. But the case does not close here. How shall we account, in the next place, for these circumstances all having met, strange as they are, in one person, and in one only among all the millions of men who have been born of woman, - and that person Jesus of Nazareth? He was of the house and lineage of David -he was born, and that by a singular event, in Bethlehem-he professed to

be "God with us" and wrought miracles to substantiate his claim. At his word or touch, the "eyes of the, blind were opened" "the lame leaped as a hart" the dumb spake, the sick were healed, and the dead lived, as the prophets had foretold. Of the wisdom of his teaching, his recorded discourses bear witness. His rejection and unjust death by his countrymen, are matters of historic fact; his resurrection and ascension stand upon the lofty evidences which have been already adduced: the destruction of the Jewish

nation, according to his own predictions, followed as the proof of the terror of his offended majesty; and his "kingdom" among men continues to this day. There is no possible means of evading the evidence of the fulfillment of these predictions in the person of our Lord, unless it could be shown that Jesus and his disciples, by some kind of concert, made the events of his life and death to correspond with the prophecies, in order to substantiate his claim to the Messiahship. No infidel has ever been so absurd as

to hazard this opinion, except Lord Bolinbroke; and his observations may be taken as a most triumphant proof of the force of this evidence from prophecy, when an hypothesis so extravagant was resorted to by an acute mind, in order to evade it. This noble writer asserts, that Jesus Christ brought on his own death by a series of willful and preconcerted measures, merely to give his disciples the triumph of an appeal to the old prophecies! But this hypothesis does not reach the case; and to have

succeeded, he ought to have shown, that our Lord preconcerted his descent from David-his being born of a virgin-his birth at Bethlehem-and his wonderful endowments of eloquence and wisdom: that by some means or other he willfully made the Jews ungrateful to him who healed their sick and cleansed their lepers; and that he not only contrived his own death, but his resurrection, and his ascension also, and the spread of his religion in opposition to human opinion and human power,

in order to give his disciples the triumph of an appeal to the prophecies! These subterfuges of infidels concede the point, and show that the truth cannot be denied but by doing the utmost violence to the understanding.

(1) No work has exhibited in so pleasing and comprehensive a manner the fulfillment of the leading prophecies of Scripture, and especially of the Old Testament, as Bishop Newton's Dissertations on the Prophecies; and the

perusal of it may be earnestly recommended, especially to the young. His illustrations of the prophecies respecting ancient Babylon are exceedingly interesting and satisfactory and still farther proofs of the wonderfully exact accomplishment of those prophecies may be seen in a highly interesting Memoir on the Ruins of Babylon, by Claudius J. Rich, published in 1815. Immense ruins were visited by him near the supposed site of ancient Babylon, which probably are, though the matter cannot be

certainly ascertained, the remains of that astonishing city, now indeed "swept with the besom of destruction? He tells us too, that the neighborhood is to the present a habitation only for birds and beasts of prey; that the dens of lions, with their slaughtered victims, are to be seen in many places; and that most of the cavities are occupied with bats and owls. It is therefore impossible to reflect without awe upon the passage of Isaiah, written during the prosperity of Babylon,

wherein he says, "The wild beasts of the desert shall lie there, and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures, and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there." The present ruins of that city also demonstrate, that the course of the Euphrates has been changed, probably in consequence of the channel formed by Cyrus; and the yielding nature of the soil demonstrates that such an operation could have been performed by a large army with great facility and dispatch.

The ruins examined by Mr. Rich bear testimony to the immense extent of the city as described by ancient authors. Vast masses of masonry, of both burnt and unburnt brick and bitumen, were observed in various excavations in these huge mountains of ruins, which are separated from each other by several miles. One is called by the Arabs, Birs Nimrond; another the Kasr, or Palace; and a third, which some have thought to be the ruins of the tower of Belus, is called by the natives Mugelibe,

OVERTURNED, which expressive term is also sometimes applied to the mounds of the Kasr.

(2) See Note, p. 181

That wonderful series of particular prophecies respecting our Lord, contained in Isaiah 53, will illustrate the foregoing observations, and may properly close this chapter.

To this prophecy it cannot be objected, that its language is symbolic, or that in more than a few beautiful metaphors, easily understood, it is even

figurative: its style is that of narrative; it is also entire in itself, and unmixed with any other subject; and it evidently refers to one single person.

So the ancient Jews understood it, and applied it to Messiah; and though the modern Jews, in order to evade its force in the argument with Christians, allege that it describes the sufferings of their nation, and not of an individual, the objection is refuted by the terms of the prophecy itself.

The Jewish people cannot be the sufferer, because he was to bear their griefs, to carry their sorrows, and to be wounded for their transgressions. "He hath borne OUR griefs and carried OUR sorrows" &c; so that the person of the sufferer is clearly distinguished from the Jewish nation. Beside which, his death and burial are spoken of, and his sufferings are represented (verse 12) as voluntary; which in no sense can apply to the Jews. "Of himself, or of some other man," therefore, as the

Ethiopian eunuch rightly conceived, the prophet must have spoken. To some individual it must be applied; to none but to our Lord can it be applied; and applied to him, the prophecy is converted into history itself. The prophet declares, that his advent and works would be a revealing of "the arm of the Lord" - a singular display of Divine power and goodness; and yet, that a blind and incredulous people would not believe "the report" Appearing in a low and humble condition, and not, as they expected

their Messiah, in the pomp of eastern monarchy, his want of "comeliness" and "desirableness" in the eyes of his countrymen, and his rejection by them, are explicitly stated - "He was despised, and we esteemed him not." He is farther described as "a man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs;" yet his sufferings were considered by the Jews as judicial, - & legal punishment, as they contend to this day, for his endeavoring to seduce men from the law, and for which they had the warrant of God himself in his

commands by Moses, that such seducers should be put to death. With what exactness are these sentiments of the Jews marked in the prophecy! We quote from the translation of Bishop Lowth.

"Yet we thought him JUDCIALLY stricken,

SMITTEN OF GOD, and afflicted."

Christ himself and his apostles uniformly represented his death as vicarious and propitiatory; and this is predicted and

confirmed, so to speak, by the evidence of this prophecy.

But he was wounded for our transgressions,

He was smitten for our iniquities;

The chastisement by which our peace is effected, was laid upon him; And by his bruises we are healed.

We all of us like sheep have strayed;

We have turn'd aside, every one to his own way;

And Jehovah hath made to light upon him the iniquity

of us all It was exacted and he was made answerable."

Who can read the next passage without thinking of Jesus before the council of the Jews, and the judgment seat of Pilate?

"As a lamb that is led to the slaughter,

And as a sheep before her shearers

Is dumb; so he opened not his mouth.

By an oppressive judgment he was taken off."

The very circumstances of his burial are given:-

"And his grave was appointed with the wicked

But with the rich man was his tomb."

Yet, though thus laid in the grave, the eye of the prophet beholds his resurrection, "the joy set before him," and into which he entered; the distribution of spiritual blessings to his people, and his spiritual conquest of the nations of the earth, notwithstanding the opposition of "the mighty;"

and he enumerates these particulars with a plainness

so wonderful, that, by merely an alteration of the tenses of the verbs, the whole might be converted into an abridged view of what has occurred, and is now occurring under the Christian dispensation, in the furtherance of human salvation:-

"If his soul shall make a propitiatory sacrifice

He shall see a seed, which shall prolong their days,

And the gracious purpose of Jehovah shall prosper in his hands.

Of the travail of his soul he shall see (the fruit) and be satisfied; By the knowledge of him shall my servant justify many;

For the punishment of their iniquities he shall bear.

Therefore will I distribute to him the many for his portion;

And the mighty people shall he share for his spoil;

Because he pour'd his soul out unto death;

And was number'd with the transgressors:

And he bore the sin of many,

And made intercession for the transgressors."

To all these predictions the words of a modern writer are applicable: "Let now the infidel, or the skeptical reader, meditate thoroughly and soberly upon these predictions. The priority of the records to the events admits of no question. The completion is obvious to every competent inquirer. Here then are facts. We are called upon to account for these facts on rational and adequate

principles. Is human foresight equal to the task? Enthusiasm? Conjecture? Chance?

Political contrivance? If none of these, neither can any other principle that may be devised by man's sagacity, account for the facts; then, true philosophy, as well as true religion, will ascribe them to the inspiration of the Almighty. Every effect must have a cause." (3) (3) SIMPSON'S Key to the Prophecies. See also a large collection of prophecies with their fulfillment in the

Appendix to vol. i, of HORNE'S Introduction to the Scriptures

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18 OBJECTIONS TO THE EVIDENCE FROM PROPHECY CONSIDERED

Beside the objections which have been anticipated and answered in the last chapter, others have been made to the argument from prophecy, which, though exceedingly futile, ought to receive a cursory notice, lest any

should think them of greater importance.

It has been objected, as to some of the prophecies, that they were written after the event; as for instance, the prophecy of Isaiah in which the name of Cyrus is found, and the prophecies of Daniel. This allegation, standing as it does upon no evidence whatever, and being indeed in opposition to contrary proof, shows the hopelessness of the cause of infidelity, and affords a lofty triumph to the evidence of prophecy. For the objector does in

fact acknowledge, that these predictions are not obscure; that the event exactly corresponded with them; and that they were beyond human conjecture. Without entering into those questions respecting the date of the books of Isaiah and Daniel, which properly belong to works on the canon of Scripture, we may observe, that the authors of this objection assert, but without giving the least proof, that Isaiah wrote his prophecies in order to flatter Cyrus, and that the book of Daniel was composed about the reign

of ANTIOCHUS EPIPHANES. It is therefore admitted that both were extant, and in their present form, before the time of the Christian era; but if so, what end, we ask, is answered by the objection? The Scriptures, as received by the Jews, were verified by the sentence of our Lord and his apostles; and unless their inspiration can be disproved, the objection in question is a mere cavil. Before it can have any weight, the whole mass of evidence which supports the mission and Divine

authority of our Savior and the apostles, must be overthrown: and not till then can it in strict, ness of reasoning be maintained. But, not to insist on this, the assertion respecting Isaiah is opposed to positive testimony. The testimony of the prophet himself, who states that he lived "in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah;" and the testimony of an independent witness, the author of the Second Book of Kings, in the twentieth chapter of which book Isaiah is brought forward

in connection with a public event of the Jewish history- the dangerous sickness and recovery of the King Hezekiah. The proof is then as decisive as the public records of a kingdom can make it, that Isaiah wrote more than a hundred years before the birth of Cyrus. (4)

(4)"But if you will persevere in believing that the prophecy concerning Cyrus was written after the event, peruse the burden of Babylon; was that also written after the event? Were the Medes then

stirred up against Babylon? Was Babylon, the glory of the kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees, then overthrown, and become as Sodom and Gomorrah? Was it then uninhabited? Was it then neither fit for the Arabian's tent nor the shepherd's fold? Did the wild beasts of the desert then lie there? Did the wild beasts of the islands then cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant places? Were Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar, the son and the grandson then cut off? Was Babylon then become a

possession of the bittern and pools of water? Was it then swept with the besom of destruction, so swept that the world knows not now where to find it?" (Bishop WATSON'S Apology.)

The time when Daniel lived and wrote is bound up in like manner with public history, - and that not only of the Jews, but of the Babylonians and Persians; and could not be antedated so as to impose upon the Jews, who received the book which bears his name into their canon, as the

production of the same Daniel who had filled exalted stations in the courts of Nebuchadnezzar and his successors. In favor of a later date being assigned to the book of Daniel, it has been said, that it has many Greek terms, and that it was not translated by the LXX, the translation now inserted in the Septuagint being by THEODOTIAN. With respect to the Greek terms, they are chiefly found in the names of the musical instruments; and the Greeks acknowledge that they derived their music

from the eastern nations. With respect to the second objection, it is unfounded. The authors of the Septuagint did translate the book of Daniel, and their version is cited by CLEMENS ROMANUS, JUSTIN MARTYR, and many of the ancient fathers; it occupied a column of the Hexapla of Origen, and is quoted by JEROME. The present Greek version by Theodotian inserted in the Septuagint, was made in the second century, and preferred as being more conformable to the

original. He repudiated version was published some years ago from an ancient MS. discovered at Rome. (5)

(5) PORPHYRY, in his books against the Christian religion, was the first to attack the prophecies of Daniel; and in modern times, COLLINS, in his "Scheme of Literal Prophecy," bent all his force against a book so pregnant with proofs of the truth of Christianity, and the inspiration of ancient prophecy. By two learned opponents his eleven

objections were most satisfactorily refuted, and shown to be mere cavils-by Bishop CHANDLER in his "Vindication" of his "Defense of Christianity," and by Dr. SAM. CHANDLER in his "Vindication of Daniel's Prophecies."

The opponents of Scripture are fond of the attempt to lower the dignity and authority of the sacred prophecies by comparing them to the heathen oracles. The absolute contrast between them has already been pointed out;

(Vide chapter xvi;) but a few additional observations may not be useless.

Of the innumerable oracles which were established and consulted by the ancient heathen, the most celebrated was the Delphic; and we may, therefore, for the purpose of exhibiting the contrast more perfectly between the Pythian oracle and the prophecies of Scripture, confine our remarks to that.

The first great distinction lies in this, that none of the predictions ever uttered by the Delphic oracle went

deep into futurity. They relate to events on the eve of taking place, and whose preparatory circumstances were known. There was not even the pretence of foresight to the distance of a few years; though had it been a hundred years, even that were a very limited period to the eye of inspired prophets, who looked through the course of succeeding ages, and gave proof by the very sweep and compass of their predictions, that they were under the inspirations of Him to whom "a day is as a thousand years, and a

thousand years as one day."

A second contrast lies in the ambiguity of the responses. The prophecies of Scripture are sometimes obscure, though this does not apply to the most eminent of those which have been most signally fulfilled, as we have already seen; but they never equivocate. For this the Pythian oracle was notorious. Historians relate that CROESUS, who had expended large sums upon the agents of this delusion, was tricked by an

equivocation; through which, interpreting the response most favorably for himself, he was induced to make an unsuccessful war on Cyrus. In his subsequent captivity he repeatedly reproached the oracle, and charged it with falsehood. The response delivered to PYRRHUS was of the same kind; and was so expressed as to be true, whether Pyrrhus conquered the Romans or the Romans Pyrrhus. Many other instances of the same kind are given; not to mention the trifling, and even bantering and jocose

oracles, which were sometimes pronounced. (6)

(6) Eusebius has preserved some fragments of a philosopher called (Enomaus; who, out of resentment for his having been so often fooled by the oracles, wrote an ample confutation of all their impertinences: "When we come to consult thee," says he to Apollo, "if thou seest what is in futurity, why dost thou use expressions that will not be understood? If thou dost, thou takest pleasure in abusing us, if thou dost

not, be informed of us, and learn to speak more clearly. I tell thee, that if thou intendest an equivoque, the Greek word whereby thou affirmedst that Croesus should overthrow a great empire, was ill chosen; and that it could signify nothing but Croesus's conquering Cyrus. If things must necessarily come to pass, why dost thou amuse us with thy ambiguities? What dost thou, wretch as thou art, at Delphi; employed in muttering idle prophecies?"

The venality, wealth, and servility of the Delphic oracle, present an. other contrast to the poverty and disinterestedness of the Jewish prophets, whom no gifts could bribe, and no power awe in the discharge of their duty. Demosthenes, in one of his speeches to the Athenians, publicly charges this oracle with being "gained over to the interests of King Philip;" and the Greek historians give other instances in which it had been corrupted by money, and the prophetess sometimes deposed for

bribery, sometimes for lewdness.

Neither threats nor persecutions had any influence with the Jewish prophets; but it would seem that this celebrated oracle of Apollo was not even proof against raillery. At first it gave its answers in verse; but the Epicureans, Cynics, and others laughing so much at the poorness of the versification, it fell at length into prose. "It was surprising," said these philosophic wits, "that Apollo, the God of poetry,

should be a much worse poet than Homer, whom he himself had inspired." Plutarch considers this as a principal cause of the declension of the oracle of Delphos.

Doubtless it had declined much in credit in his day; and the farther spread of Christianity completed its ruin.

Can then the prophecies of Scripture be paralleled with these dark, and venal, and delusive oracles, without impiety? and could any higher honor be wished for the Jewish

prophets, than the comparison into which they are thus brought with the agents of paganism at Delphos and other places? They had recourse to no smooth speeches, no compliances with the tempers and prejudices of men. They concealed no truth which they were commissioned to declare, however displeasing to their nation and hazardous to themselves. They required no caves, or secret places of temples, from which to utter their messages; and those who consulted them were not

practiced upon by the bewildering ceremonies imposed upon inquirers at Delphos. They prophesied in streets, and courts, and palaces, and in the midst of large assemblies. Their predictions had a clear, determinate, and consistent sense; and they described future events with so many particularities of time and place, as made it scarcely possible that they should be misunderstood or misapplied.

Pure and elevated as was the character of the Jewish

prophets, the hardihood of infidelity has attempted to asperse their character; because it appears from Scripture story, that there were false prophets and bad men who bore that name.

Balaam is instanced, though not a Jewish prophet; but that he was always a bad man, wants proof. The probability is, that his virtue was overcome by the offers of Balak; and the prophetic spirit was not taken away from him, because there was an evident design on

the part of God to make his favor to Israel more conspicuous, by obliging a reluctant prophet to bless, when he would have cursed, and that in the very presence of a hostile king. When that work was done, Balaam was consigned to his proper punishment.

With respect to the Jewish false prophets, it is a singular proceeding to condemn the true ones for their sake, and to argue that because bad men assumed their functions, and imitated their manner, for corrupt purposes, the

universally received prophets of the nation, - men who, from the proofs they gave of their inspiration, had their commission acknowledged even by those who hated them, and their writings received into the Jewish canon, - were bad men also. Let the characters of Moses, Samuel, Elijah, Elisha, Nathan, Isaiah, Jeremiah, (7) Daniel, and the authors of the other prophetical books, be considered; and how true are the words of the apostle, that they were "HOLY men of old," as well

as that they were "moved by the Holy Ghost!" That the prophets who prophesied "smooth things" were never considered as true prophets, except for a time by a few who wished to have their hopes flattered, is plain from this-none of their writings were preserved by the Jews. Their predictions would not abound in reproofs and threatenings, like those of Isaiah and Jeremiah; and yet the words of those prophets, who were personally most displeasing to the Jews of

the age in which they lived, have been preserved, while every flattering prophecy was suffered to fall into oblivion almost as soon as it was uttered. Can we have a more decisive proof than this, that the false prophets were a perfectly distinct class of men, - the venal imitators of these "holy men of old," but who never gave, even to those most disposed to listen to their delusive prophecies, a satisfactory proof of their prophetic commission?

(7) A weak attempt has been made by some infidel

writers to fasten a charge of falsehood on Jeremiah, in the case of his confidential interview with King Zedekiah. A satisfactory refutation is given by Bishop WATSON in his answer to Paine, letter vi.

Attempts have been made to show that a few of the prophecies of Scripture have failed. The following are the principal instances:-

It has been said that a false promise was made to Abraham, when it was promised to him, that his descendants should

possess the territory which lies between the Euphrates and the river of Egypt.

But this objection is clearly made in ignorance of the Scriptures; for the fact is, that David conquered that territory, and that the dominions of Solomon were thus extended. (Vide 2 Sam. 8; 1 Chron. 18.)

Voltaire objects, that the prophets made promises to the Jews of the most unbounded riches, dominion, and influence; insomuch that they could only have been accomplished by their

conquering or proselyting the entire of the habitable globe. On the contrary, he says, they have lost their possessions instead of obtaining either property or power, and therefore the prophecies are false.

The case is here unfairly stated. The prophets never made such exaggerated promises. They predict many spiritual blessings to be bestowed in the times of Messiah, under figures drawn from worldly opulence and power, the figurative language of which no attentive reader

can mistake. They also promise many civil advantages, but only conditionally on the obedience of the nation; and they speak in high terms of the state of the Jewish nation, upon its final restoration, for which objectors must wait before they can determine the predictions to be false.

But did not Voltaire know, that the loss of their own country by the Jews, of which he speaks, was predicted in the clearest manner? and would he not have seen, had he not been

blinded by his prejudices, that his very objection acknowledges the truth of prophecy? The promises of the prophets have not been falsified in the instance given, but their threats have been signally fulfilled.

Paine, following preceding writers of the same sentiments, asserts the prophecy of Isaiah to Ahaz not to have been verified by the event, and is thus answered by Bishop Watson: (Apology, letter v:) "The prophecy is quoted by you, to prove, and it is the only instance you

produce, that Isaiah was 'a lying prophet and impostor.' Now I maintain, that this very instance proves that he was a true prophet and no impostor. The history of the prophecy, as delivered in the seventh chapter, is this, - Rezin king of Syria, and Pekah king of Israel, made war upon Ahaz king of Judah; not merely, or, perhaps, not at all for the sake of plunder, or the conquest of territory, but with a declared purpose of making an entire revolution in the government of Judah, of

destroying the royal house of David, and of placing another family on the throne. Their purpose is thus expressed-' Let us go up against Judah, and vex it, and let us make a breach therein for us, and set a king in the midst of it, even the son of Tabeal.' Now what did the Lord commission Isaiah to say to Ahaz? Did he commission him to say, The kings shall not vex thee? No.-The kings shall not conquer thee? No.-The kings shall not succeed against thee? No. He commissioned him to say- ' It (the purpose of

the two kings) shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass.' I demand-Did it stand, did it come to pass? Was any "evolution effected? Was the royal house of David dethroned and destroyed? Was Tabeal ever made king of Judah? No. The prophecy was perfectly accomplished. You say,' Instead of these two kings failing in their attempt against Ahaz, they succeeded: Ahaz was defeated and destroyed.' I deny the fact: Ahaz was defeated but not ' destroyed; and even the ' two hundred thousand

women, and sons and daughters,' whom you represent as carried into captivity, were not carried into captivity: they were made captives, but they were not carried into captivity; for the chief men of Samaria, being admonished by a prophet, would not suffer Pekah to bring the captives into the land, - ' They rose up, and took the captives, and with the spoil clothed all that were naked among them, and arrayed them and shod them, and gave them to eat and to drink, and anointed them, and carried all the

feeble of them upon asses, (some humanity, you see, among those Israelites, whom you everywhere represent as barbarous brutes,) and brought them to Jericho, the city of palm trees, to their brethren,' 2 Chron. 28:15. The kings did fail in their attempt: their attempt was to destroy the house of David, and to make a revolution: but they made no revolution; they did not destroy the house of David, for Ahaz slept with his fathers; and Hezekiah, his son, of the house of David, reigned in his stead."

A similar attempt is made by the same writer to fix a charge of false vaticination upon Jeremiah, and is thus answered by the bishop of Llandaff: "' In the thirty-fourth chapter is a prophecy of Jeremiah to Zedekiah, in these words, verse 2, Thus saith the Lord, Behold I will give this city into the hands of the king of Babylon, and will burn it with fire; and thou shalt not escape out of his hand, but thou shall surely be taken, and delivered into his hand! and thine eyes shall behold the eyes of the king of Babylon, and

he shall speak with thee mouth to mouth, and thou shalt go to Babylon. Yet hear the word of the Lord, O Zedekiah king of Judah: thus saith the Lord, Thou shalt not die by the sword, but thou shalt die in peace; and with the burnings of thy fathers, the former kings that were before thee, so shall they burn odors for thee, and will lament thee, saying, Ah, lord! for I have pronounced the word saith the Lord.-Now, instead of Zedekiah beholding the eyes of the king of Babylon, and speaking with him mouth to mouth, and dying

in peace, and with the burnings of odors at the funeral of his fathers, (as Jeremiah hath declared the Lord himself had pronounced,) the reverse, according to the fifty-second chapter, was the case: it is there stated, (verse 10,) That the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes; then he put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him in chains, and carried him to Babylon, and put him in prison till the day of his death. What can we say of these prophets, but that they are impostors and

liars? I can say this-that the prophecy you have produced was fulfilled in all its parts; and what then shall be said of those who call Jeremiah a liar and an impostor? Here then we are fairly at issue- you affirm that the prophecy was not fulfilled, and I affirm that it was fulfilled in all its parts. 'I will give this city into the hands of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire:' so says the prophet. What says the history? 'They (the forces of the king of Babylon) burnt the house of God, and brake down the

walls of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire,' 2 Chron. 36:19.-'Thou shalt not escape out of his hand, but thou shalt surely be taken and delivered into his hand:' so says the prophet. What says the history? 'The men of war fled by night, and the king went the way toward the plain, and the army of the Chaldees pursued after the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho; and all his army were scattered from him: so they took the king, and brought him up to the king of Babylon, to Riblah,'

2 Kings 25:5. The prophet goes on, 'Thine eyes shall behold the eyes of the king of Babylon, and he shall speak with thee mouth to mouth.' No pleasant circumstance this to Zedekiah, who had provoked the king of Babylon by revolting from him. The history says, ' The king of Babylon gave judgment upon Zedekiah,' or, as it is more literally rendered from the Hebrew, ' spake judgments with him at Riblah.' The prophet concludes this part with,' And thou shalt go to Babylon:' the history says,

'The king of Babylon bound him in chains, and put him in prison till the day of his death,' Jer. 52:11.-'Thou shalt not die by the sword.' He did not die by the sword, he did not fall in battle.-' But thou shalt die in peace.' He did die in peace, he neither expired on the rack nor on the scaffold; was neither strangled nor poisoned, no unusual fate of captive kings; he died peaceably in his bed, though that bed was in a prison.-'And with the burnings of thy fathers shall they burn odors before thee.' I cannot prove

from the history that this part of the prophecy was accomplished, nor can you prove that it was not. The probability is, that it was accomplished; and I have two reasons on which I ground this probability. Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, to say nothing of other Jews, were men of great authority in the court of the king of Babylon, before and after the commencement of the imprisonment of Zedekiah; and Daniel continued in power till the subversion of the kingdom of Babylon by Cyrus. Now

it seems to me to be very probable, that Daniel and the other great men of the Jews, would both have inclination to request, and influence enough with the king of Babylon to obtain permission to bury their deceased prince Zedekiah, after the manner of his fathers. But if there had been no Jews at Babylon of consequence enough to make such a request, still it is probable that the king of Babylon would have ordered the Jews to bury and lament their departed prince, after the manner of their country. Monarchs,

like other men, are conscious of the instability of human condition; and when the pomp of war has ceased, when the insolence of conquest is abated, and the fury of resentment is subsided, they seldom fail to revere royalty even in its ruins, and grant, without reluctance, proper obsequies to the remains of captive kings."

Ezekiel is assaulted in the same manner. "You quote," says the same writer, "a passage from Ezekiel, in the twenty-ninth chapter, where speaking of Egypt, it

is said-' No foot of man shall pass through it, nor foot of beast shall pass through it, neither shall it be inhabited forty years:'

this, you say, ' never came to pass, and consequently it is false, as all the books I have already reviewed are.' Now that the invasion predicted did come to pass, we have, as Bishop Newton observes, 'the testimonies of Megasthenes and Berosus, two heathen historians, who lived about 300 years before Christ; one of whom affirms, expressly, that

Nebuchadnezzar conquered the greater part of Africa; and the other affirms it in effect, in saying, that when Nebuchadnezzar heard of the death of his father, having settled his affairs in Egypt, and committed the captives whom he took in Egypt to the care of some of his friends to bring them after him, he hasted directly to Babylon.' And if we had been possessed of no testimony in support of the prophecy, it would have been a hasty conclusion, that the prophecy never, came to pass; the history of

Egypt, at so remote a period, being nowhere accurately and circumstantially related. I admit that no period can be pointed out from the age of Ezekiel to the present, in which there was no foot of man or beast to be seen for forty years in all Egypt; but some think that only a part of Egypt is here spoken of; (8) and surely you do not expect a literal accomplishment of a hyperbolical expression, denoting great desolation; importing that the trade of Egypt which was carried on then, as at present, by

caravans, by the foot of man and beast, should be annihilated."

(8) The opinion of the bishop, that not the whole of what is now called Egypt was intended in the prophecy, seems to derive confirmation from the following passages in Richardson's Travels in Egypt in 1817:- "The Delta, according to the tradition of the Jonians, is the only part that is, strictly speaking, entitled to be called Egypt, which is hieroglyphically represented by the figure of

a heart, no unapt similitude." - "The principal places mentioned in our sacred writings, Zoan, Noph, and Tophanes, are all referable to the Delta. Probably little of them remains."

To this we may add, that the passage respecting the depopulation of Egypt stands in the midst of an extended prophecy, which has received the most marked fulfillment, and illustrates, perhaps as strikingly as anything which can be adduced, the caviling spirit of infidelity,

and proves that truth could never be the object of discussions thus conducted. Here is a passage which has some obscurity hanging over it. No one however can prove that it was not accomplished, even so fully that the expressions might be used without violent hyperbole; for the invasion of Nebuchadnezzar was one of the same sweeping and devastating character as his invasion and conquest of Judea: and we know that the greater part of the inhabitants of that country were destroyed, or

led captive, and that the land generally remained untilled for seventy years, though not absolutely left without inhabitant. In the common language of men, Judea might be said not to be inhabited, so prodigious was the excision of its people; and in such circumstances, from the total cessation of all former intercourse, commercial and otherwise, between the different parts of the kingdom, it might also, without exaggeration, be said, that the foot of man and beast did not "pass THROUGH it;" their going

from one part to another on business, or for worship at Jerusalem, being wholly suspended. Now, as we have no reason to suppose the Babylonian monarch to have been more merciful to Egypt than to Judea, the same expressions in a popular sense might be used in respect of that country. Here however infidelity thought a cavil might be raised, and totally-may we not say willfully?-overlooked a prediction immediately following, which no human sagacity could conjecture, and against which it is in

vain to urge, that it was written after the event: for the accomplishment of the prophecy runs on to the present day, and is as palpable and obvious as the past history, and the present political state of that country -

"Egypt shall be the basest of the kingdoms, neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations-there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt." (Vide Ezek. 29, and 30) It is more than two thousand years since the prophecy was delivered, and Egypt has

never recovered its liberties, but is to this day under the yoke of foreigners. It was conquered by the Babylonians; then by the Persians; and in succession passed under the dominion of the Macedonians, Romans, Saracens, Mamelucs, and Turks. No native prince of Egypt has ever restored his country to independence, and ascended the throne of his ancestors; and the descendants, of the ancient Egyptians are to this hour in the basest and most oppressed condition. Yet in

Egypt the human mind had made some of its earliest and most auspicious efforts. The stupendous monuments of art and power, the ruins of which lie piled upon the banks of the Nile, or still defy the wastes of time, attest the vastness of the designs, and the extent of the power of its princes. Egypt, too, was possessed of great natural advantages. Its situation was singularly calculated to protect it against foreign invasion; while its great fertility promised to secure the country it enriched from poverty, baseness,

and subjection. Yet after a long course of grandeur, and in contradiction to its natural advantages, Ezekiel pronounced that the kingdom should be "the basest of all kingdoms" and that there should be "no more a prince of the land of Egypt." So the event has been, and so it remains; and that this wonderful prophecy should be passed over by infidels in silence, while they select from it a passage which promised to give some color to objection, is deeply characteristic of the state of their minds. It is not from

deficiency of evidence that the word of God is rejected by them. The evil is not the want of light, but the love of darkness.

Much ridicule has been cast upon the prophets for those significant actions by which they illustrated their predictions; as when Jeremiah hides his linen girdle in a hole of the rock, and breaks a potter's vessel in the sight of the people; when Ezekiel weighs the hair of his head and beard in balances, with many other instances familiar to those who read the

Scriptures. But this ridicule can only proceed from ignorance. In the early ages of the world, the deficiency of language was often supplied by signs; and when language was improved, "the practice remained," says Bishop Warburton, "after the necessity was over; especially among the easterns, whose natural temperament inclined them to this mode of conversation. The charges then of absurdity and fanaticism brought against the prophets, vanish of themselves. The absurdity

of an action consists in its being extravagant and insignificative; but use and a fixed application made the actions in question both sober and pertinent. The fanaticism of an action consists in fondness for such actions as are unusual, and for foreign modes of speech; but those of the prophets were idiomatic and familiar," We may add, that several of these actions were performed in vision; and that, considering the genius of the people who were addressed, they were calculated strongly to

excite their attention, the end for which they were adopted.

Such are the principal objections which have been made to Scripture prophecy, as the proof of Scripture truth. That they are so few and so feeble, when enemies so prying and capable have employed themselves with so much misplaced zeal to discover any vulnerable part, is the triumph of truth. Their futility has been pointed out; and the whole weight of the preceding evidence in favor of the truth of the

Old and New Testaments, remains unmoved. We have, indeed, but glanced at a few of these extraordinary revelations of the future, for the sake, not of exhibiting the evidence of prophecy, which would require a distinct volume, but of explaining its nature and pointing out its force. To the prophecies of the Old Testament, the attentive inquirer will add those of our Lord and his apostles, which will appear not less extraordinary in themselves, nor less illustrious in their

fulfillment, so far as they have received their accomplishment. Many prophecies both of the Old and New Testament evidently point to future times, and this kind of evidence will consequently accumulate with the lapse of ages, and may be among the means by which Jews, Mohammedans, and pagans shall be turned to the Christian faith. At all events, prophecy even unfulfilled now answers an important end. It opens our prospect into the future and if the detail is obscure, yet, notwithstanding the

mighty contest which is still going on between opposing powers and principles, we see how the struggle will terminate, and know, to use a prophetic phrase, that "at eventime it shall be light."

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19 INTERNAL EVIDENCE OF THE TRUTH OF SCRIPTURE - COLLATERAL EVIDENCE

The internal evidence of a revelation from God has

been stated to be that which arises from the apparent excellence and beneficial tendency of the doctrine. (Vide chap, ix.) This at least is its chief characteristic, though other particulars may also be included in this species of proof, and shall be adduced.

The reader will recollect the distinction made in the chapter just referred to, between rational and authenticating evidence. It has been observed, that there are some truths made known to us through the

medium of a revelation from God, which, though in their nature undiscoverable by the unassisted faculties of man, yet, when once revealed, carry to our reason, so far as they are of a nature to be comprehended by it, the demonstration which accompanies truth of any other kind (Vide chip, ix.) But it is only within the limit just mentioned that this position holds good; for such truths only must be understood as are accompanied with reasons or rational proofs in the revelation itself, or which,

when once suggested to the mind, directs its thoughts and observations to surrounding facts and circumstances, or to established truths to which they are capable of being compared, and by which they are confirmed. The internal evidence of the Holy Scriptures, therefore, as far as doctrine is concerned, is restrained to truths of this class. Of other truths revealed to us in the Bible, and those in many instances fundamental to the system of Christianity, we have no proof of this kind; but they

stand on the firm basis of Divine attestation, and suffer no diminution of their authority because the reasons of them are either hidden from us for purposes of moral discipline, or because they transcend our faculties. If we had the reasons of them before us, they would not be more authentic, though to the understanding they would be more obvious. Such are the doctrines of a trinity of persons in the unity of the Godhead; of the hypostatic union of the two natures in Christ; of his Divine and eternal

Sonship, &c. Such are many facts in the Divine government-as the permission of evil, and the long apparent abandonment of heathen nations-the unequal religious advantages afforded to individuals as well as nations-and many of the circumstances of our individual moral trial upon earth. Of the truth of these doctrines, and the fitness of these and many other facts, we have no internal evidence whatever; but a very large class of truths which are found in the revelations of Scripture,

afford more or less of this kind of proof, and make their appeal to our reason as well as to our faith;- in other words, their reasonableness is such, that though the great demonstration does not rest upon that, it affords an additional argument why they should be thankfully received, and heartily credited.

The first and fundamental doctrine of Scripture is, the existence of God; the great and the sole First Cause of all things; eternal, self existent, present in all

places, knowing all things; infinite in power and wisdom; and perfect in goodness, justice, holiness, and truth. That this view of the Divine Being, for which we are indebted to the Scriptures alone, presents itself with powerful rational demonstration to the mind of man, is illustriously shown by that astonishing change of opinion on this great subject which took place in pagan nations upon the promulgation of Christianity, and which in Europe continues to this day substantially

unaltered. Not only those gross notions which prevailed among the vulgar, but the dark, uncertain, and contradictory researches of the philosophers of different schools have passed away; and the truth respecting God, stated in the majesty and simplicity of the Scriptures, has been, with few exceptions, universally received, and that among enlightened Deists themselves. These discoveries of revelation have satisfied the human mind on this great and primary doctrine; and have

given it a resting place which it never before found, and from which, if it ever departs, it finds no demonstration until it returns to the "marvelous light" into which revealed religion has introduced us. A class of ideas, the most elevated and sublime, and which the most profound minds in former times sought without success, have thus become familiar to the very peasants in Christian nations. Nothing can be a more striking proof of the appeal which the Scripture character of God makes to the

unsophisticated reason of mankind. (9) (9) The Scripture character of the Divine Being is thus strikingly drawn out by Dr. A. Clarke in his note on Gen. 1:1:-

"The eternal, independent, and self-existent Being. The Being whose purposes and actions spring from himself, without foreign motive or influence: he who is absolute in dominion; the most pure, most simple, and most spiritual of all essences: infinitely benevolent, beneficent, true, and holy:

the cause of all being, the upholder of all things; infinitely happy, because infinitely good; and eternally self sufficient, needing nothing that he has made. Illimitable in his immensity, inconceivable in his mode of existence, and indescribable in his essence: known fully only to himself, because an infinite mind can only be comprehended by itself. In a word, a Being who, from his infinite wisdom, cannot err or be deceived; and who, from his infinite goodness, can do nothing

but what is eternally just, right, and kind."

Of the state and condition of MAN as it is represented in our holy writings, the evidence from fact, and from the consciousness of our own bosoms, is very copious. What man is, in his relations to God his maker and governor, we had never discovered without revelation; but now this is made known, confirmatory fact crowds in on every side, and affords its evidence of the truth of the doctrine.

The Old and New Testaments agree in representing the human race as actually vicious, and capable, without moral check and control, of the greatest enormities; so that not only individual happiness, but social also, is constantly obstructed or endangered. To this the history of all ages bears witness, and present experience gives its testimony. - All the states of antiquity crumbled down, or were suddenly overwhelmed, by their own vices; and the general character and conduct of

the people which composed them may be read in the works of their historians, poets, and satirists, which have been transmitted to our times. These, as to the Greeks and Romans, fully bear out the darkest coloring of their moral condition to be found in the well known first chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Church at Rome, and other passages in his various epistles. To this day, the same representation depicts the condition of almost all pagan countries, and, in many respects too, some

parts of Christendom, where the word of God has been hidden from the people, and its moral influence, consequently, has not been suffered to develop itself. In those countries also where that corrective has been most carefully applied, though exalted beyond comparison in just, honorable, benevolent, and sober principles and habits, along with the frequent occurrence of numerous and gross actual crimes, the same appetites and passions may be seen in constant contest with the

laws of the state; with the example of the virtuous; and the controlling influence of the word of God, preached by faithful ministers, taught as a part of the process of education, and spread through society by the multiplication of its copies since the invention of printing. The Holy Scriptures therefore characterize man only as he is actually found in all ages, and in all places to the utmost bounds of those geographical discoveries which have been made through the adventurous

spirit of modern navigators.

But they not only assume men to be actually vicious, but vicious in consequence of a moral taint in their nature, - originally and inevitably so, but for those provisions of grace and means of sanctity of which they speak; and as this assumption is the basis of the whole scheme of moral restoration, through the once promised seed of the woman, and the now actually given JESUS, the SAVIOUR, so they constantly remind him that

he is "born in sin, and shapen in iniquity" and that, being born of the flesh, "he cannot please God." What is thus represented as doctrine appeals to our reason through the evidence of unquestionable fact. The strong tendency of man to crime cannot be denied. Civil penal laws are enacted for no other purpose than to repress it; they are multiplied in the most civilized states to shut out the evil in all those new directions toward which the multiplied relations of man, and his increased

power, arising from increased intelligence, have given it its impulse. Every legal deed, with its seals and witnesses bears testimony to that opinion as to human nature which the experience of man has impressed on man; and history itself is a record chiefly of human guilt, because examples of crime have everywhere and at all times been much more frequent than examples of virtue. This tendency to evil, the Scriptures tell us, arises from "the heart" - the nature and disposition of man; and it is not

otherwise to be accounted for. - Some indeed have represented the corruption of the race, as the result of association and example; but if men were naturally inclined to good, and averse to evil, how is it that not a few individuals only, but the whole race have become evil by mutual association? This would be to make the weaker cause the more efficient, which is manifestly absurd. It is contrary too to the reason of the case, that the example and association of persons naturally well disposed, should produce

any other effect than that of confirming and maturing their good dispositions; as it is the effect of example and association, among persons of similar tastes and of similar pursuits, to confirm and improve the habit which gives rise to them. As little plausibility is there in the opinion which would account for this general corruption from bad education. - How, if man in all ages had been rightly affected in his moral inclinations, did a course of deleterious education commence? How, if

commenced, came it, that what must have been so abhorrent to a virtuously disposed community was not arrested, and a better system of instruction introduced? But the fact itself may be denied, as the worst education inculcates a virtue above the general practice, and no course of education was ever adopted purposely to encourage immorality. In the Scriptures alone we find a cause assigned which accounts for the phenomenon, and we are bound therefore by the rules of philosophy itself to

admit it. It is this, that man is by NATURE prone to evil; and as it would be highly unreasonable to suppose, that this disposition was implanted in him by his benevolent and holy Maker, we are equally bound in reason to admit the Scripture solution of the FALL of the human race from a higher and better state.

A third view of the condition of man contained in. the Scriptures, is, that he is not only under the Divine authority, but that the government of heaven

as to him is of a mixed character; that he is treated with severity and with kindness also; that considered both as corrupt in his nature and tendencies, and as in innumerable instances actually offending, he is placed under a rigidly restraining discipline, to meet his case in the first respect, and under correction and penal dispensation with relation to the latter. On the other hand, as he is an object beloved by the God he has offended; a being for whose pardon and recovery

Divine mercy has made provision; moral ends are connected with these severities, and nature and providence as well as revelation are crowned with instances of Divine benevolence to the sinning race. The proof of these different relations of man to God, surrounds us in that admixture of good and evil, of indulgence and restraint, of felicity and misery, to which he is so manifestly subject. Life is felt in all ordinary circumstances to be a blessing; but it is short and uncertain, subject to

diseases and accidents. Many enjoyments fall to the lot of men; yet with the majority they are attained by means of great and exhausting labors of the body or of the mind, through which the risks to health and life are greatly multiplied; or they are accompanied with so many disappointments, fears, and cares, that their number and their quality are greatly lessened. The globe itself, the residence of man, and upon whose fertility, seasons, exterior surface, and interior stratification so much of

the external felicity of man depends, bears marks of a mingled kind of just and merciful government suited to such a being as man in the state described in the Scriptures, and to none else. It cannot be supposed, that if inhabited by a race of beings perfectly holy and in the full enjoyment of the Divine favor, this earth would be subject to destructive earthquakes, volcanoes, and inundations; to blights and dearth, the harbingers of famine; to those changes in the atmosphere which induce wide-wasting

epidemic disorders; to that general sterility of soil which renders labor necessary to such a degree, as fully to occupy the time of the majority of mankind, prevent them from engaging in pursuits worthy an intellectual nature, and wear down their spirits; nor that the metals so necessary for man in civilized life, and, in many countries, the material of the fire by which cold must be repelled, food prepared, and the most important arts executed, should be hidden deep in the bowels

of the earth, so that a great body of men must be doomed to the dangerous and humbling labor of raising them! These and many other instances (1) show a course of discipline very incongruous with the most enlightened views of the Divine character, if man be considered as an innocent being. On the contrary, that he is under an unmixed penal administration, is contradicted by the facts, that the earth yet yields her increase ordinarily to industry; that the destructive convulsions of

nature are but occasional; and that, generally, the health of the human race predominates over sickness, and their animal enjoyments over positive misery. To those diverse relations of man to God, as stated in the Bible, the contrarieties of nature and providence bear an exact adaptation. Assume man to be anything else than what is represented in Scripture, they would be discordant and inexplicable; in this view they harmonize. Man is neither innocent nor finally condemned-he is fallen and guilty, but not

excluded from the compassion and care and benignity of his God.

(1) See the argument largely and ingeniously exhibited in GISBORNE"S Testimony of Nat. Theol. &c.

The next leading doctrine of Christianity is the restoration of man to the Divine favor, through the merits of THE VICARIOUS AND SACRIFICIAL DEATH OF CHRIST, the incarnate Son of God. To this many objections have been offered; but, on the other hand, many

important reasons for such a procedure have been overlooked. The rational evidence of this doctrine, we grant, is partial and limited; but it will be recollected, that it has been already proved, that the authority and truth of a doctrine are not thereby affected. It is indeed not unreasonable to suppose, that the evidence of the fitness and necessity of such a doctrine should be to us obscure.

"The reason of the thing," says Bishop Butler, "and the whole analogy of nature

should teach us, not to expect to have the like information concerning the Divine conduct, as concerning; our own duty." On whatever terms God had been pleased to offer forgiveness to his creatures, if any other had been morally possible, it is not to be supposed that all the reasons of his conduct, which must of course respect the very principles of his government in general, extending not only to man, but to other beings, could have been explained; and certain it is, that those to whom the benefit was

offered would have had no right to require it.

The Christian doctrine of atonement as a necessary merciful interposition, is grounded upon the liability of man to punishment in another life, for sins committed against the law of God in this; and against this view of the future prospects of mankind there can lie no objection of weight.

Men are capable of committing sin, and sin is productive of misery and disorder. These positions cannot be denied. That to

violate the laws of God and to despise his authority are not light crimes, is clear from considering them in their general effect upon society, and upon the world.

Remove from the human race all the effects produced by vice, direct and indirect; all the inward and outward miseries and calamities which are entirely evitable by mankind, and which they willfully bring upon themselves and others, and scarcely a sigh would be heaved, or a groan heard,

except those extorted by natural evils, (small comparatively in number) throughout the whole earth. The great sum of human misery is the effect of actual offence; and as it is a principle in the wisest and most perfect human legislation to estimate the guilt of individual acts by their general tendency, and to proportion the punishment to them under that consideration, the same reason of the case is in favor of this principle, as found in Scripture; and thus considered, the demerit of the sins of an

individual against God becomes incalculable. Nor is there any foundation to suppose, that the punishment assigned to sin by the judicial appointment of the Supreme Governor, is confined to the present life; for before we can determine that, we must be able to estimate the demerit of an act of willful transgression in its principle, habits, and influence, which, as parties implicated, we are not in a state of feeling or judgment to attempt, were the subject more within our grasp. But the obvious

reason of the case is in favor of the doctrine of future punishment; for not only is there an unequal administration of punishments in the present life, so that many eminent offenders pass through the present state without any visible manifestation of the Divine displeasure against their conduct, but there are strong and convincing proofs that we are placed in a state of trial, which continues throughout life, and the result of which can only be known, and consequently we ourselves can only become subjects

of final reward or punishment, after existence in this world terminates. From the circumstances we have just enumerated to indicate the kind of government which is exercised over the human race, we must conclude, that, allowing the Supreme Governor to be wise and just, benevolent and holy, men are neither treated as innocent nor as incorrigibly corrupt. Now, what reason can possibly be given for this mixed kind of administration, but that the moral improvement of man is the

object intended by it? The severity discountenances and restrains vice; the annexation of inward felicity in all cases, (and outward in all those instances in which the result depends upon the conduct of the individual,) to holy habits and acts, recommends and sanctions them, and allures to the use of those means which God has provided for enabling us to form and practice them. No other final causes, it would appear, can be assigned for the peculiar manner in which we are governed in the

present life; and if the deterring and correcting severity on the one hand, and the alluring and instructive kindness on the other, which mark the Divine administration, continue throughout life; if, in every period of his life here, man is capable, by the use of the prescribed means, of forming new habits and renouncing old ones, and thus of accomplishing the purposes of the moral discipline under which he is placed, then is he in a state of trial throughout life, and if so, he is

accountable for the whole course of his life; and his ultimate reward or punishment must be in a state subsequent to the present.

It is also the doctrine of Scripture, that this future punishment of the incorrigible shall be final and unlimited; another consideration of great importance in considering the doctrine of atonement. This is a monitory doctrine which a revelation only could unfold; but being made, it has no inconsiderable degree of

rational evidence. It supposes, it is true, that no future trial shall be allowed to man, the present having been neglected and abused; and to this there is much analogy in the constant procedures of the Divine government in the present life. When many checks and admonitions from the instructions of the wise, and the examples of the forward, have been disregarded, poverty and sickness, infamy and death, ensue, in a thousand cases which the observation of every man will furnish; the trial of an individual, which

is to issue in his present happiness or misery, is terminated; and so far from its being renewed frequently, in the hope of his finally profiting by a bitter experience, advantages, and opportunities, once thrown away, can never be recalled. There is nothing therefore contrary to the obvious principles of the Divine government as manifested in this life, in the doctrine which confines the space of man's highest and most solemn probation within certain limits, and beyond them cutting off all

his hope. But let this subject be considered by the light thrown upon it by the circumstance, that the nature of man is immortal. With those who deny this to be the prerogative of the thinking principle in man, it would be trifling to hold this argument; but with those who do not, the consideration of the subject under this view is important.

The existence of man is never to cease. It follows then from this, that either the future trials to be allowed to those who in the

present life have been incorrigible, are to be limited in number, or, should they successively fail, are to be repeated forever. If the latter, there can be no ultimate judgment, no punishment or reward; and consequently the Divine government as implying these, (and this we know it does, from what takes place in the present life,) must be annihilated. If this cannot be maintained, is there sufficient reason to conclude, that all to whom trial after trial is supposed to be afforded in new and

varied circumstances, in order to multiply the probabilities, so to speak, of their final recovery from rebellion, will be at length reclaimed? Before this can be answered, it must be recollected, that a state of suffering which would compel obedience, if we should suppose mere suffering capable of producing this effect, or an exertion of influence upon the understanding and will which shall necessitate a definite choice, is neither of them to be assumed as entering into the circumstances of any new

state of trial. Every such future trial, to be probationary at all, that is, in order to bring out the existence of a new moral principle, and by voluntary acts to prove it, must substantially be like the present, though its circumstances may vary. Vice must have its allurements; virtue must rise from self- denial, and be led into the arena to struggle with difficulty; many present interests and pleasures must be seen in connection with vice; the rewards of obedience must, as now, be not only more

refined than mere sense can be gratified with, but also distant: the mind must be capable of error in its moral estimate of things, through the influence of the senses and passions; and so circumstanced, that those erroneous views shall only be prevented or corrected by watchfulness, and a diligent application to meditation, prayer, and the use of those means of information on moral subjects which almighty God may have put within their reach. We have no right in this argument to imagine to ourselves a

future condition where the influence of every circumstance will be directed to render vice most difficult to commit, and virtue most difficult to avoid; for this would not be a state of trial: and if in this present life, men have obstinately resisted all admonitions from heaven; obdurate themselves against all the affecting displays of the Divine kindness, and the deterring manifestations of the Divine majesty; it is most reasonable to conclude, that a part of them at least would abuse successive

trials, and frustrate their intention, by attachment to present and sensual gratification. What then is to become of them? If we admit a moral government of rational creatures at all, their probation cannot be eternal, for that leads to no result; if probation be appointed, it implies accountability, a judicial decision, and that judicial decision, in the case of the incorrigible, punishment. Whenever then the trial, or the series of trials, terminates as to these immortal beings, the subsequent punishment, of

what kind so ever it may be, must be eternal. This doctrine of Scripture rests therefore upon others, of which the rational evidence is abundant and convincing;- that almighty God exercises a moral government over his creatures; that the present life is a state of moral discipline and trial; and that man is immortal. If these are allowed, the eternal duration of future punishments, as to the obstinately wicked, must follow; and its accordance with the principles just

mentioned, is its rational evidence.

That atonement for the sins of men which was made by the death of Christ, is represented in the Christian system as the means by which mankind may be delivered from this awful catastrophe-from judicial inflictions of the displeasure of a Governor, whose authority has been condemned, and whose will has been resisted, which shall know no mitigation in their degree, nor bound to their duration; and if an end, supremely great and

benevolent, can commend any procedure to us the Scriptural doctrine of atonement commends this kind of appeal to our attention. This end it professes to accomplish, by means which, with respect to the Supreme Governor himself, preserve his character from mistake, and maintain the authority of his government; and with respect to man, give him the strongest possible reason for hope, and render more favorable the circumstances of his earthly probation. These are considerations which

so manifestly show, from its own internal constitution, the superlative importance and excellence of Christianity, that it would be exceedingly criminal to overlook them.

How sin may be forgiven without leading to such misconceptions at the Divine character as would encourage disobedience, and thereby weaken the influence of the Divine government, must be considered as a problem of very difficult solution. A government which

admitted no forgiveness, would sink the guilty to despair; a government which never punishes offence, is a contradiction- it cannot exist. Not to punish, is to dissolve authority; to punish without mercy, is to destroy, and, where all are guilty, to make the destruction universal. That we cannot sin with impunity, is a matter determined. The Ruler of the world is not careless of the conduct of his creatures; for that penal consequences are attached to offence, is not a subject

of argument, but is made evident from daily observation of the events and circumstances of the present life. It is a principle, therefore, already laid down, that the authority of God must be preserved; and it ought to be observed, that in that kind of administration which restrains evil by penalty, and encourages obedience by favor and hope, we and all moral creatures are the interested parties, and not the Divine Governor himself, whom, because of his independent and efficient nature, our

transgressions cannot injure. The reasons therefore which compel him to maintain his authority, do not terminate in himself. If he becomes a party against offenders, it is for our sake, and for the sake of the moral order of the universe, to which sin, if encouraged by a negligent administration, and by entire or frequent impunity, would be the source of endless disorder and misery: and if the granting of pardon to offence be strongly and even severely guarded, we are to refer it to the moral

necessity of the case as arising out of the general welfare of accountable creatures, liable to the deep evil of sin, and not to any reluctance on the part of our Maker to forgive, much less to anything vindictive in his nature, - charges which have been most inconsiderately and unfairly brought against the Christian doctrine of Christ's vicarious sufferings. If it then be true, that the relief of offending man from future punishment, and his restoration to the Divine favor, ought for the

interests of mankind themselves, and for the instruction and caution of other beings, to be so bestowed, that no license shall be given to offence; that God himself, while he manifests his compassion, should not appear less just, less holy, than the maintenance of an efficient and even awful authority demands; that his commands shall be felt to be as compelling, and that disobedience shall as truly, though not so unconditionally, subject us to the deserved penalty, as though no hope of

forgiveness had been exhibited, we ask, on what scheme, save that which is developed in the New Testament, these necessary conditions are provided for? Necessary they are, unless we contend for a license and an impunity which shall annul the efficient control of the universe, a point which no reasonable man will contend for; and if not, then he must allow an internal evidence of the truth of the doctrine of Scripture, which makes the offer of pardon consequent only upon the securities we

have before mentioned. If it be said, that sin may be pardoned in the exercise of the Divine prerogative, the reply is, that if this prerogative were exercised toward a part of mankind only, the passing by of the others would be with difficulty reconciled to the Divine character; and if the benefit were extended to all, government would be at an end. This scheme of bringing men within the exercise of mercy does not therefore meet the obvious difficulty of the case; nor is it improved by confining the act of grace only to

repentant criminals. For in the immediate view of danger, what offender, surrounded with the wreck of former enjoyments, feeling the vanity of guilty pleasures, now past forever, and beholding the approach of the delayed, but threatened, penal visitation, but would repent? Were this principle to regulate human governments, every criminal would escape, and judicial forms would become a subject for ridicule. Nor is it the principle which the Divine Being in his conduct to

men in the present state acts upon, though in this world punishments are not final and absolute. Repentance does not restore health injured by intemperance, property wasted by profusion, or character once stained by dishonorable practices.

If repentance alone can secure pardon, then all must be pardoned, and government dissolved, as in the case of forgiveness by the exercise of mere prerogative; if a selection be made, then different and discordant principles

of government are introduced into the Divine administration, which is a derogatory supposition.

To avoid the force of these obvious difficulties, some have added reformation to repentance, and would restrain forgiveness to those only, who to their penitence add a course of future obedience to the Divine law. In this opinion a concession of importance is made in favor of the doctrine of atonement as stated in the Scriptures. For we ask, why an act of

grace should be thus restricted?

Is not the only reason this, that everyone sees, that to pardon offence either on mere prerogative, or on the condition of repentance, would annul every penalty, and consequently encourage vice?

The principle assumed then is, that vice ought not to be encouraged by an unguarded exercise of the Divine mercy; that the authority of government ought to be upheld; that almighty God ought not to appear indifferent to

human actions, nor otherwise than as a God "hating iniquity" and "loving righteousness." Now precisely on these principles does the Christian doctrine of atonement rest. It carries them higher; it teaches that other means have been adopted to secure the object; but the ends proposed are the same; and thus to the principle on which that great doctrine rests, the objector can take no exception-that point he has surrendered, and must confine himself to a comparison of the

efficiency of the respective modes, by which the purposes of moral government may be answered in the exercise of mercy to the guilty in his own system, and in that of Christianity. We shall not, in order to prove "the wisdom" as well as the grace of the doctrine of the Bible on this subject, press our opponent with the fact, important as it is, that in the light vouchsafed unto us into the rules of the government of God over men with reference to the present state merely, we see no reason to conclude

anything with certainty as to the efficacy of reformation. A change of conduct does not, any more than repentance, repair the mischief's of former misconduct. Even the sobriety of the reformed man does not always restore health; and the industry and economy of the formerly negligent and wasteful, repair not the losses of extravagance. Nor is it necessary to dwell upon the consideration which this theory involves as to all the principles of government established among men, which in

flagrant cases never suspend punishment in anticipation of a change of conduct; but which in the infliction of penalty look steadily to the crime actually committed, and to the necessity of vindicating the violated majesty of the laws. The argument might indeed be left here; but we go farther and show, that the reformation anticipated is ideal, because it is impracticable.

To make this clear it must be recollected, that they who oppose this theory of human reconciliation to

God, to that of the Scriptures, leave out of it not only the vicarious sacrifice of Christ, but other important doctrines; and especially that agency of the Holy Spirit which awakens the thoughtless to consideration, and prompts and assists their efforts to attain a higher character, and to commence a new course of conduct. Man is therefore left, unassisted, and uninfluenced, to his own endeavors, and in the peculiar, unalleviated circumstances of his actual moral state. What that

state is, we have already seen. It has been argued that nothing can account for the practical corruption of mankind, but a moral taint in our hearts, a propensity of nature to evil and not to good; and that every other mode of accounting for the moral phenomena which the history of man and daily experience present, is inconclusive and contradictory. How then is this supposed reformation to commence? We do not say, the exchange of one vice for another, that specious kind of

reformation by which many are deceived, for the objector ought to have the credit of intending a reformation which implies love to the purity of the Divine commands; cordial respect for the authority of our Maker; and not partial, but universal obedience. But if the natural, unchecked disposition of the mind is to evil, and supernatural assistance be disallowed, "who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" To natural propension, we are also to add in this case, as reformation is the matter

in question, the power of habit, proverbially difficult to break, though man is not in fact in the unassisted condition which the error now opposed supposes. The whole of this theory assumes human nature to be what it is not; and a delusive conclusion must, therefore, necessarily result. If man be totally corrupt, the only principles from which reformation can proceed do not exist in his nature; and if we allow no more than that the propensity to evil in him is stronger than the propensity to good, it is

absurd to suppose, that in opposing propensities the weakest should resist the most powerful, - that the stream of the rivulet should force its way against the tides of the ocean. The reformation, therefore, which is to atone for his vices, is impracticable.

The question proposed abstractedly, How may mercy be extended to offending creatures, the subjects of the Divine government, without encouraging vice, by lowering the righteous and holy character of God, and

the authority of his government, in the maintenance of which the whole universe of beings are interested? is therefore at once one of the most important and one of the most difficult which can employ the human mind. None of the theories which have been opposed to Christianity, afford a satisfactory solution of the problem. They assume principles either destructive to moral government, or which cannot, in the circumstances of man, be acted upon.

The only answer is found in the Holy Scriptures. They alone show, and indeed they alone profess to show, how God may be just, and yet the justifier of the ungodly. Other schemes show how he may be merciful; but the difficulty does not lie there. This meets it, by declaring "the righteousness of God" at the same time that it proclaims his mercy. The voluntary sufferings of an incarnate, Divine person, "for us," in our room and stead, magnify the justice of God; display his hatred to sin; proclaim "the

exceeding sinfulness" of transgression, by the deep and painful sufferings of the substitute; warn the persevering offender of the terribleness as well as the certainty of his punishment; and open the gates of salvation to every penitent. It is a part of the same Divine plan to engage the influence of the Holy Spirit, to awaken that penitence, and to lead the wandering soul back to himself; to renew the fallen nature of man in righteousness, at the moment he is justified through faith, and to place

him in circumstances in which he may henceforth "walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." All the ends of government are here answered. No license is given to offence; the moral law is unrepealed; the day of judgment is still appointed, future and eternal punishments still display their awful sanctions; a new and singular display of the awful purity of the Divine character is afforded; yet pardon is offered to all who seek it; and the whole world may be saved!

With such evidence of suitableness to the case of mankind; under such lofty views of connection with the principles and ends of moral government, does the doctrine of THE ATONEMENT present itself. But other important considerations are not wanting, to mark the united wisdom and goodness of that method of extending mercy to the guilty, which Christianity teaches us to have been actually and exclusively adopted. It is rendered indeed "worthy of all acceptation," by the

circumstance of its meeting the difficulties we have just dwelt upon, - difficulties which could not otherwise have failed to make a gloomy impression upon every offender awakened to a sense of his spiritual danger; but it must be very inattentively considered, if it does not farther commend itself to us, by not only removing the apprehensions we might feel as to the justice of the Divine Lawgiver, but as exalting him in our esteem as "the righteous Lord, who loveth righteousness" who surrendered his beloved

Son to suffering and death, that the influence of moral goodness might not be weakened in the hearts of his creatures-as a God of love, affording in this instance a view of the tenderness and benignity of his nature infinitely more impressive and affecting than any abstract description could convey, or than any act of creating and providential power and grace could furnish, and therefore most suitable to subdue that enmity which had unnaturally grown up in the hearts of his creatures, and which, when

corrupt, they so easily transfer from a law which restrains their inclination to the Lawgiver himself. If it be important to us to know the extent and reality of our danger, by the death of Christ it is displayed, not in description, but in the most impressive action; if it be important that we should have assurance of the Divine placability toward us, it here received a demonstration incapable of greater certainty: if gratitude is the most powerful motive of future obedience, and one which renders command on the

one part, and active service on the other, "not grievous but joyous," the recollection of such obligations as the "love of Christ" has laid us under, is a perpetual spring to this energetic affection, and will be the means of raising it to higher and more delightful activity for ever. All that can most powerfully illustrate the united tenderness and awful majesty of God, and the odiousness of sin; all that can win back the heart of man to his Maker and Lord, and render future obedience a matter of

affection and delight as well as duty; all that can extinguish the angry and malignant passions of man to man; all that can inspire a mutual benevolence; and dispose to a self-denying charity for the benefit of others; all that can arouse by hope or tranquillize by faith, is to be found in the vicarious death of Christ, and the principles and purposes for which it was endured.

"Ancient history tells us of a certain king who made a law against adultery, in which it was enacted that

the offender should be punished by the loss of both eyes. The very first offender was his own son. The case was most distressing; for the king was an affectionate father, as well as a just magistrate. After much deliberation and inward struggle, he finally commanded one of his own eyes to be pulled out and one of his son's. It is easier to conceive than to describe what must have been the feelings of the son in these most affecting circumstances. His offence would appear to him in a new light; it would appear

to him, not simply as connected with painful consequences to himself, but as the cause of a father's sufferings, and as an injury to a father's love. If the king had passed over the law altogether, in his son's favor, he would have exhibited no regard for justice, and he would have given a very inferior proof of affection.

"If we suppose that the happiness of the young man's life depended on the eradication of this criminal propensity, it is not easy to imagine how the king could

more wisely or more effectually have promoted this benevolent object. The action was not simply a correct representation of the king's character, - it also contained in itself an appeal most correctly adapted to the feelings of the criminal. It justified the king in the exercise of clemency; it tranquillized the son's mind, as being a pledge of the reality and sincerity of his father's gracious purposes toward him; and it identified the object of his esteem with the object of his gratitude. Mere gratitude,

unattracted by an object of moral worth, could never have stamped an impression of moral worth on his character; which was his father's ultimate design. We might suppose the existence of this same character without its producing such an action; we might suppose a conflict of contending feelings to be carried on in the mind without evidencing, in the conduct flowing from it, the full vehemence of the conflict, or defining the adjustment of the contending feelings; but we cannot suppose any mode

of conduct so admirably fitted to impress the stamp of the father's character on the mind of the son, or to associate the love of right and the abhorrence of wrong with the most powerful instincts of the heart. The old man not only wished to act in perfect consistency with his own views of duty, but also to produce a salutary effect on the mind of his son; and it is the full and effectual union of these two objects which forms the most beautiful and striking part of this remarkable history.

"There is a singular resemblance between this moral exhibition, and the communication which God has been pleased to make of himself in the Gospel. We cannot but love and admire the character of this excellent prince, although we ourselves have no direct interest in it; and shall we refuse our love and admiration to the King and Father of the human race, who, with a kindness and condescension unutterable, has, in calling his wandering children to return to duty and to happiness, presented to

each of us a like aspect of tenderness and purity, and made use of an argument which makes the most direct and irresistible appeal to the most familiar, and at the same time the most powerful principles in the heart of man?

"A pardon without a sacrifice, could have made but a weak and obscure appeal to the understanding or the heart. It could not have demonstrated the evil of sin; it could not have demonstrated the graciousness of God; and

therefore it could not have led man either to hate sin or to love God. If the punishment as well as the criminality of sin consists in an opposition to the character of God, the fullest pardon must be perfectly useless, while this opposition remains in the heart; and the substantial usefulness of the pardon will depend upon its being connected with such circumstances as may have a natural and powerful tendency to remove this opposition, and create a resemblance. The pardon of the Gospel is connected

with such circumstances; for the sacrifice of Christ has associated sin with the blood of a benefactor, as well as with our own personal sufferings, - and obedience with the dying entreaty of a friend breathing out a tortured life for us, as well as with our own unending glory in his blessed society. This act, like that in the preceding illustration, justifies God as a lawgiver in dispensing mercy to the guilty; it gives a pledge of the sincerity and reality of that mercy; and, by associating principle with

mercy, it identifies the object of gratitude with the object of esteem, in the heart of the sinner." '(2) (2) "Remarks on the Internal Evidence of the Truth of Revealed Religion; by THOMAS ERSKINE, Esq." - This popular and interesting volume contains many very striking, just, and eloquent remarks in illustration of the internal evidence of several doctrines of the New Testament, and especially of that of the atonement. It is to be regretted, however, that it sets out from a false

principle, and builds so much truth upon the sand. "The sense of moral obligation is the standard to which reason instructs man to adjust his system of natural religion," and this is "the test by which he is to try all pretensions to religion." The principle of the book therefore is to show the excellence of Christianity from its embodying the abstract principles of natural religion in intelligible and palpable action-a gratuitous and unsubstantial foundation.

Inseparably connected with the great doctrine of atonement, and adapted to the new circumstances of trial in which the human race was placed in consequence of the lapse of our first parents, is the doctrine of the influence of the Holy Spirit; and this, though supposed by many to be farthest removed from rational evidence, can neither be opposed by any satisfactory argument, nor is without an obvious reasonableness.

The Scriptures represent man in the present state as

subject not only to various sensible excitements to transgression; and as influenced to resist temptation by the knowledge of the law of God and its sanctions, by his own sense of right and duty, and by the examples of the evils of offence which surround him; but also as solicited to obedience by the influence of the Holy Spirit, and to persevering rebellion by the seductions of evil spirits.

This is the doctrine of revelation, and if the evidences of that revelation

can be disproved, it may be rejected; if not, it must be admitted, whether any argumentative proof can be offered in its favor or not. That it is not unreasonable may be first established.

That God, who made us, and who is a pure Spirit, cannot have immediate access to our thoughts, our affections, and our will, it would certainly be much more unreasonable to deny than to admit; and if the great and universal Spirit possesses this power, every physical objection at least to the doctrine in question

is removed, and finite unbodied spirits may have the same kind of access to the mind of man, though not in so perfect and intimate a degree. Before any natural impossibility can be urged against this intercourse of spirit with spirit, we must know what no philosopher, however deep his researches into the causes of the phenomena of the mind, has ever professed to know-the laws of perception, memory, and association. We can suggest thoughts and reasons to each other, and

thus mutually influence our wills and affections. We employ for this purpose the media of signs and words; but to contend, that these are the only media through which thought can be conveyed to thought, or that spiritual beings cannot produce the same effects immediately, is to found an objection wholly upon our ignorance. All the reason which the case, considered in itself, affords, is certainly in favor of this opinion. We have access to each other's minds; we can suggest thoughts, raise affections, influence the

wills of others; and analogy therefore favors the conclusion, that, though by different and latent means, unbodied spirits have the same access to each other, and to us.

If no physical impossibility lies against this representation of the circumstances of our probation, no moral reason certainly can be urged against the principle itself, which makes us liable to the contrary solicitations of other beings. That God our heavenly Father should be solicitous for our welfare, is

surely to be admitted; and that there may be invisible beings who are anxious, from various motives, some of which may be conceived, and others are unknown, to entice us to evil, is made probable by this, that among men, every vicious character seeks a fellowship in his vices, and employs various arts of seduction, even when he has no interest in success, that he may not be left to sin alone. In point of fact, we see this principle of moral trial in constant operation with respect to our fellow creatures. Who

is not counseled, and warned, and entreated by the good? Who is not invited to offence by the wicked? What are all the instructive, enlightening, and influential institutions which good and benevolent men establish and conduct, but means by which others may be drawn and influenced to what is right? and what are all the establishments and devices to multiply the gratifications and pleasures of mankind, but means employed by others to encourage religious trifling, and indifference to things

devout and spiritual, and often to seduce to vice in its grossest forms? The principle is therefore in manifest operation, and he who would except to this doctrine of Scripture, must also except to the Divine government, as it is manifested in the facts of experience, and which clearly makes it a circumstance of our probation in this world, that our opinions, affections, and wills should be subject to the influence of others, both for good and evil.

By reference to this fact, we may also show the futility of the objection to the doctrine of supernatural influence, which is drawn from the free agency of man. The Scriptures do not teach that supernatural influence, either good or bad, destroys our freedom and accountability. How then, it is asked, is the one to be reconciled with the other? The answer is, that we are sure they are not incompatible, because, though we may be strongly influenced and solicited to good or evil conduct by virtuous or vicious persons;

though they may enforce their respective wishes by arguments, or persuasions, or hopes, or fears; though they may carefully lead us into circumstances which may be most calculated to undermine or to corroborate virtuous resolutions; we are yet conscious that we are at liberty either to yield or to resist; and on this consciousness, equally common to all, is founded that common judgment of the conduct of those, who, though carefully well advised, or assiduously seduced, are always treated

as free agents in public opinion, and praised or censured accordingly. The case is the same where the influence is supernatural, only the manner in which it is applied is different. In one it operates upon the springs which most powerfully move the will and affections from without, in the other it is more immediately from within; but in neither case is it to be supposed that any other beings can will or choose for us. The modus operandi in both cases may be inexplicable; but while the power of influencing

our choice may belong to others, the power of choosing is exclusively and necessarily our own.

Since therefore no reason physical or moral can be urged against the doctrine of Divine influence; since the principle on which it is founded, as a circumstance in our trial on earth, is found to accord entirely with the actual arrangements of the Divine government in other cases, everything is removed which might obstruct our view of the excellence of this encouraging tenet of

Divine revelation. The moral helplessness of man has been universally felt, and universally acknowledged. To see the good and to follow the evil has been the complaint of all; and precisely to such a state is the doctrine of Divine influence adapted. As the atonement of Christ stoops to the judicial destitution of man, the promise of the Holy Spirit meets the case of his moral destitution. One finds him without any means of satisfying the claims of justice, so as to exempt him from punishment; the

other, without the inclination or the strength to avail himself even of proclaimed clemency, and offered pardon, and becomes the means of awakening his judgment, and exciting, and assisting, and crowning his efforts to obtain that boon, and its consequent blessings. The one relieves him from the penalty, the other from the disease of sin; the former restores to man the favor of God, the other renews him in his image.

To this eminent adaptation of the doctrine to the

condition of man, we may add the affecting view which it unfolds of the Divine character. That tenderness and compassion of God to his offending creatures; that reluctance that they should perish; that Divine and sympathizing anxiety, so to speak, to accomplish their salvation, which were displayed by "the cross of Christ," are here in continued and active manifestation. A Divine Agent is seen "seeking," in order that he may save, "that which is lost;" following the "lost sheep

into the wilderness," that he may "bring it home rejoicing;" delighting to testify of Christ, because of the salvation he has procured; to accompany with his influence written revelation, because that alone contains "words by which men may be saved;" affording special assistance to ministers, because they are the messengers of God proclaiming peace; and, in a word, knocking at the door of human hearts; arousing the conscience; calling forth spiritual desires; opening the eyes of the mind more clearly to

discern the meaning and application of the revealed word; and mollifying the heart to receive its effectual impression:- doing this too without respect of persons, and making it his special office and work to convince the mistaken; to awaken the indifferent; to comfort the penitent and humble; to plant and foster and bring to maturity in the hearts of the obedient every grace and virtue. These are views of God which we could not have had but for this doctrine; and the obvious tendency of them is, to fill the heart

with gratitude for a condescension so wonderful and a solicitude so tender; to impress us with a deep conviction of the value of renewed habits, since God himself stoops to work them in us; and to admonish us of the infinite importance of a personal experience of the benefits of Christ's death, since the means of our pardon and sanctification unapplied can avail us nothing.

We may add, (and it is no feeble argument in favor of the excellence of this

branch of Christian doctrine,) that we are thereby encouraged to aspire after a loftier character of moral purity, and a more perfect state of virtue; as well as to engage in more difficult duties. Were we left wholly to our own resources, we should despair; and perhaps it is exactly in proportion to the degree in which this promise of the Holy Spirit is apprehended by those who truly receive Christianity, that they advance the standard of possible moral attainment. That God should "work in

us to will and to do of his good pleasure," is a reason why we should "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling;" for as our freedom is not destroyed, as even the Spirit may be "grieved" and "quenched," our fall would be unspeakably aggravated by our advantages. But the operation of God within us is also a motive to the working our salvation "out," - to the perfecting of our sanctification even to eternal life. None can despair of conquering any evil habit, who steadily look to this great doctrine,

and cordially embrace it; none can despair of being fully renewed again in the image of God, when they know that it is one of the offices of the Holy Spirit to effect this renovation; and none who habitually rest upon the promise of God for all that assistance which the written word warrants them to expect in difficult and painful duties, and in those generous enterprises for the benefit of others which a hallowed zeal may lead them to engage in, will be discouraged in either. "In the name of God," such persons have in all ages

"lifted up their banners," and have thus been elevated into a decision, a boldness, an enterprise, a perseverance, which no other consideration or trust could inspire. Such are the practical effects of this doctrine, that prompts to attainments in inward sanctity and outward virtue, which would have been chimerical to consider possible, but for the aid of a Divine influence; and it leads to exertion for the benefit of others, the success of which would otherwise be too doubtful

to encourage the undertaking.

It would be easy to adduce many other doctrines of our religion, which, from their obvious excellency and correspondence with the experience and circumstances of mankind, furnish much interesting internal evidence in favor of its Divinity; but as this would greatly exceed the limits of a chapter, and as those doctrines have been considered against which the most strenuous objections from pretended rational principles have

been urged; the moral state and condition of man; the atonement made by the death of Christ for the sins of the world; and the influences of the Holy Spirit, - it may have been sufficient for the argument to have shown that even such doctrines are accompanied with important and interesting reasons; and that they powerfully commend Christianity to universal acceptance. What has been said is to be considered only as a specimen of the rational proof which accompanies many of the

doctrines of revelation, and which a considerate mind may with ease enlarge by numerous other instances drawn from its precepts, its promises, and those future and ennobling hopes which it sets before us. The wonderful agreement in doctrine among the writers of the numerous books of which the Bible is composed, who lived in ages very distant from each other, and wrote under circumstances as varied as can well be conceived, may properly close this part of the internal evidence. "In all the bearings, parts, and

designs of the book of God, we shall find a most striking harmony, fitness, and adaptation of its component parts to one beautiful, stupendous, and united whole; and that all its parts unite and terminate in a most magnificent exhibition of the glory of God, the luster of his attributes, the strict and true perfection of his moral government, the magnitude and extent of his grace and love, especially as manifested in the salvation and happiness of man, in his recovery from moral

depravity, and restoration to a capacity of acquiring happiness eternal." (LLOYD'S HORAE Theologica.) This argument is so justly and forcibly expressed in the following quotation, as to need no farther elucidation:-

"The sacred volume is composed by a vast variety of writers, men of every different rank and condition, of every diversity of character and turn of mind; the monarch and the plebeian, the illiterate and learned, the foremost in talent and the

moderately gifted in natural advantages, the historian and the legislator, the orator and the poet, - each has his peculiar province; some prophets, some apostles, some evangelists,' living in ages remote from each other, under different modes of civil government, under different dispensations of the Divine economy, filling a period of time which reached from the first dawn of heavenly light to its meridian radiance. The Old Testament and the New, the law and the Gospel; the prophets

predicting events, and the evangelists recording them; the doctrinal yet didactic epistolary writers, and he who closed the sacred canon in the Apocalyptic vision;- all these furnished their respective portions, and yet all tally with a dove-tailed correspondence; all the different materials are joined with a completeness the most satisfactory, with an agreement the most incontrovertible.

"This instance of uniformity without design, of agreement without

contrivance; this consistency maintained through a long series of ages, without, a possibility of the ordinary methods for conducting such a plan; these unparalleled congruities, these unexampled coincidences, form altogether a species of evidence, of which there is no other instance in the history of all the other books in the world.

"All these variously gifted writers here enumerated, concur in this grand peculiarity, - that all have the same end in view, all

are pointing to the same object; all, without any projected collusion, are advancing the same scheme; each brings in his several contingent without any apparent consideration how it may unite with the portions brought by other contributors, without any spirit of accommodation, without any visible intention to make out a case, without indeed any actual resemblance, more than that every separate portion being derived from the same spring, each must be governed by one common principle, and

that principle being truth itself, must naturally and consentaneously produce assimilation, conformity, agreement. What can we conclude from all this, but what is indeed the inevitable conclusion, - a conclusion which forces itself on the mind, and compels the submission of the understanding;- that all this, under differences of administration, is the work of one and the same great omniscient and eternal Spirit!" (Mrs. MORE'S Character of St. Paul.)

The second branch of the internal evidence of the Scriptures consists of their moral tendency; and here, as in doctrine, the believer may take the highest and most commanding ground.

If, as to the truths revealed in them, the before "unknown God," unknown even to the philosophers of Athens, has been "declared" unto us; if the true moral condition, dangers, and hopes of man have been revealed; if the "kindness and good will of God our Savior unto man"

has appeared; if the true propitiation has been disclosed, and the gates of salvation opened; if, through the promised influences of the Holy Spirit, the renewal of our natures in the image of God originally borne by man, the image of his holiness, is made possible to all who seek it; if we have, in the consentaneous system of doctrine which we find in the Scriptures, every moral direction which can safely guide, every promise which can convey a blessing suitable to our condition, and every

hope which can at once support under suffering, and animate us to go through our course of trial, and aspire to the high rewards of another life; the moral influence of such a system is as powerful as its revelations of doctrine are lofty and important.

One of the most flagrant instances of that malignity of heart with which some infidel writers have assailed the Scriptures, and which, more than anything, shows that it is not the want of evidence, but a hostility arising from a less

creditable source, which leads them, in the spirit of enmity and malice, willfully to libel what they ought to adore, - is, that they have boldly asserted the Bible to have an immoral tendency. For this, the chief proof which they pretend to offer is that it records the failings and the vices of some of the leading characters in the Old and New Testaments.

The fact is not denied: but they suppress what is equally true, that these vices are never mentioned with approbation; that the

characters stained with them are not, in those respects, held up to our imitation and that their frailties are recorded for admonition. They dwell upon the crimes of David, and sneer at his being called "a man after God's own heart:" but they suppress the fact, that he was so called long before the commission of those crimes; and that he was not at any time declared to be acceptable to God with reference to his private conduct as a man, but in respect of his public conduct as a king. Nor do

they state, that these crimes are, in the same Scriptures, represented as being tremendously visited by the displeasure of the Almighty, both in the life of David, and in the future condition of his family. From such objectors the Bible can suffer nothing, because the injustice of their attacks implies a constrained homage to the force of truth. Even this very objection furnishes so strong an argument in favor of the sincerity and honesty of the sacred writers, that it confirms their credibility in that

which unbelievers deny, as well as in those relations which they are glad, for a hostile purpose, to admit. Had the Scriptures been written by cunning impostors, such acknowledgments of crimes and frailties in their most distinguished characters, and in some of the writers themselves, would not have been made.

"The evangelists all agree in this most unequivocal character of veracity, that of criminating themselves. They record their own errors and offences with

the same simplicity with which they relate the miracles and sufferings of their Lord. Indeed their dullness, mistakes, and failings, are so intimately blended with his history by their continual demands upon his patience and forbearance, as to make no inconsiderable or unimportant part of it. This fidelity is equally admirable both in the composition and in the preservation of the Old Testament, a book which everywhere testifies against those whose history it contains, and not seldom

against the relators themselves. The author of the Pentateuch proclaims, in the most pointed terms, the ingratitude of those chosen people toward God. He prophesies that they will go on filling up the measure of their offences, calls heaven and earth to witness against them that he has delivered his own soul, and declares that as they have worshipped gods which were no gods, GOD will punish them by calling a people who were no people. Yet this book, so disgraceful to their national character, this

register of their own offences, they would rather die than lose. 'This,' says the admirable Pascal, ' is an instance of integrity which has no example in the world, no root in nature.' In the Pentateuch and the Gospels, therefore, these parallel, these unequalled instances of sincerity, are incontrovertible proofs of the truth of both." (Mrs. MORE'S Character of St. Paul.) It is but just to say, that the malignant absurdity and wickedness of charging the Scriptures with an immoral tendency, have not been incurred by

all who have even zealously endeavored to undermine their Divine authority. Many of them make important concessions on this point. They show in their own characters the effect of their unbelief, and probably the chief cause of it: Blount committed suicide, because he was prevented from an incestuous marriage; Tyndal was notoriously infamous; Hobbes changed his principles with his interests; Morgan continued to profess Christianity while he wrote against it. The moral

character of Voltaire was mean and detestable; Bolinbroke was a rake and a flagitious politician. Collins and Shaftesbury qualified themselves for civil offices by receiving the sacrament, while they were endeavoring to prove the religion of which it is a solemn expression of belief, a mere imposture; Hume was revengeful, disgustingly vain, and an advocate of adultery and self-murder; Paine was the slave of low and degrading habits; and Rousseau an abandoned sensualist, and guilty of the basest actions,

which he scruples not to state and palliate. Yet even some of these have admitted the superior purity of the morals of the Christian revelation. The eloquent eulogium of Rousseau on the Gospel and its Author is well known; it is a singular passage, and shows, that it is the state of the heart, and not the judgment, which leads to the rejection of the testimony of God. (3) (3) "I will confess to you that the majesty of the Scriptures strikes me with admiration, as the purity of the Gospel has its influence

on my heart. Peruse the works of our philosophers, with all their pomp of diction: how mean, how contemptible are they, compared with the Scriptures! Is it possible that a book at once so simple and sublime should be merely the work of man? Is it possible that the sacred personage, whose history it contains, should be himself a mere man? Do we find that he assumed the tone of an enthusiast or ambitious sectary? What sweetness, what purity in his manners! What an affecting gracefulness in

his delivery! What sublimity in his maxims! What profound wisdom in his discourses! What presence of mind in his replies! How great the command over his passions! Where is the man, where the philosopher, who could so live, and so die, without weakness, and without ostentation? When Plato described his imaginary good man with all the shame of guilt, yet meriting the highest rewards of virtue, he described exactly the character of Jesus Christ: the resemblance

was so striking that all the Christian fathers perceived it.

"What prepossession, what blindness must it be to compare the son of Sophronicus [Socrates] to the Son of Mary! What an infinite disproportion is there between them! Socrates dying without pain or ignominy easily supported his character to the last: and if his death, however easy, had not crowned his life, it might have been doubted whether Socrates, with all his wisdom, was anything

more than a vain sophist. He invented, it is said, the theory of morals. Others, however, had before put them in practice; he had only to say, therefore, what they had done, and to reduce their examples to precept. But where could Jesus learn among his competitors, that pure and sublime morality, of which, he only has given us both precept and example? The death of Socrates, peaceably philosophizing with his friends, appears the most agreeable that could be wished for; that of Jesus, expiring in the midst

of agonizing pains, abused, insulted, and accused by a whole nation, is the most horrible that could be feared; Socrates, in receiving the cup of poison, blessed the weeping executioner who administered it; but Jesus, in the midst of excruciating tortures, prayed for his merciless tormentors. Yes! if the life and death of Socrates were those of a sage, the life and death of Jesus were those of a God. Shall we suppose the evangelic history a mere fiction? Indeed, my friend, it bears not the marks of

fiction; on the contrary, the history of Socrates, which nobody presumes to doubt, is not so well attested as that of Jesus Christ. Such a supposition, in fact, only shifts the difficulty, without obviating it; it is more inconceivable, that a number of persons should agree to write such a history, than that one only should furnish the subject of it. The Jewish authors were incapable of the diction, and strangers to the morality contained in the Gospel, the marks of whose truth are so striking and inimitable, that the

inventor would be a more astonishing man than the hero."

Nor is it surprising that a truth so obvious should, even from adversaries, extort concession. Nowhere but in the Scriptures have we a perfect system of morals; and the deficiencies of pagan morality only exalt the purity, the comprehensiveness, the practicability of ours. The character of the Being acknowledged as Supreme must always impress itself upon moral feeling and

practice; the obligation of which rests upon his will. We have seen the views entertained by pagans on this all-important point, and their effects. The God of the Bible is "holy" without spot; "just" without intermission or partiality; "good" - boundlessly benevolent and beneficent; and his law is the image of himself, "holy, just, and good." These great moral qualities are not as with them, so far as they were apprehended, merely abstract, and therefore comparatively feeble in their influence.

In the person of Christ, our God incarnate, they are seen exemplified in action, displaying them, selves amidst human relations, and the actual circumstances of human life. With them, the authority of moral rules was either the opinion of the wise, or the tradition of the ancient, confirmed it is true, in some degree, by observation and experience; but to us, they are given as commands immediately from the supreme Governor, and ratified as HIS by the most solemn and explicit

attestations. With them, many great moral principles, being indistinctly apprehended, were matters of doubt and debate; to us, the explicit manner in which they are given excludes both: for it cannot be questioned, whether we are commanded to love our neighbor as ourselves; to do to others as we would they should do to us, a precept which comprehends almost all relative morality in one plain principle; to forgive our enemies; to love all mankind; to live

"righteously" and "soberly," as well as "godly;" that magistrates must be a terror only to evil doers, and a praise to them that do well; that subjects are to render honor to whom honor, and tribute to whom tribute is due; that masters are to be just and merciful, and servants faithful and obedient. These and many other familiar precepts are too explicit to be mistaken, and too authoritative to be disputed; two of the most powerful means of rendering law effectual. Those who never enjoyed

the benefit of revelation, never conceived justly and comprehensively of that moral state of the heart from which right and beneficent conduct alone can flow, and therefore when they speak of the same virtues as those enjoined by Christianity, they are to be understood as attaching to them a lower idea. In this the infinite superiority of Christianity displays itself.

The principle of obedience is not only a sense of duty to God, and the fear of his displeasure; but a tender

love, excited by his infinite compassions to us in the gift of his Son, which shrinks from offending. To this influential motive as a reason of obedience, is added another, drawn from its end: one not less influential; but which heathen moralists never knew, - the testimony that we please God, manifested in the acceptance of our prayers, and in spiritual and felicitous communion with him. By Christianity, impurity of thought and desire is restrained in an equal degree as their overt acts in the lips and

conduct. Humanity, meekness, gentleness, placability, disinterestedness, and charity, are all as clearly and solemnly enjoined as the grosser vices are prohibited; and on the unruly tongue itself is impressed "the law of kindness." Nor are the injunctions feeble; they are strictly LAW, and not mere advice and recommendations.

"Without holiness no man shall see the Lord;" and thus our entrance into heaven, and our escape from perdition, are made

to depend upon this preparation of mind. To all this is added possibility, nay certainty of attainment, if we use the appointed means. A pagan could draw, though not with lines so perfect, a beau ideal of virtue, which he never thought attainable; but the "full assurance of hope" is given by the religion of Christ to all who are seeking the mora l renovation of their nature; because "it is God that worketh in us to will and to do of his good pleasure."

When such is the moral tendency of Christianity, how obvious is its beneficial tendency both as to the individual and to society! From every passion which wastes, and burns, and frets, and enfeebles the spirit, the individual is set free, and his inward peace renders his obedience cheerful and voluntary; and we might appeal to infidels themselves, whether, if the moral principles of the Gospel were wrought into the hearts, and embodied in the conduct of all men, the world would not be

happy;- whether, if governments ruled, and subjects obeyed by the laws of Christ;- whether, if the rules of strict justice which are enjoined upon us regulated all the transactions of men, and all that mercy to the distressed which we are taught to feel and to practice came into operation;- and whether, if the precepts which delineate and enforce the duties of husbands, wives, masters, servants, parents, children, fully and generally governed all these relations, a better age

than that called golden by the poets, would not be realized, and Virgil's Jam redit et Virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna,

be far too weak to express the mighty change? Such is the tendency of Christianity. On immense numbers of individuals it has superinduced these moral changes; all nations, where it has been fully and faithfully exhibited, bear, amidst their remaining vices, the impress of its hallowing and benevolent influence: it is now in active exertion, in many of

the darkest and worst parts of the earth, to convey the same blessings; and he who would arrest its progress, were he able, would quench the only hope which remains to our world, and prove himself an enemy, not only to himself, but to all mankind. What then, we ask, does all this prove, but that the Scriptures are worthy of God, and propose the very ends which rendered a revelation necessary? Of the whole system of practical religion which it contains we may say, as of that which is embodied in

our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, in the words of one who, in a course of sermons on that Divine composition, has entered most deeply into its spirit, and presented a most instructive delineation of the character which it was intended to form: "Behold Christianity in its native form, as delivered by its great Author. See a picture of God, as far as he is imitable by man, drawn by God's own hand.-What beauty appears in the whole! How just a symmetry! What exact proportion in every part!

How desirable is the happiness here described! How venerable, how lovely is the holiness!" (WESLEY'S Sermons.) " If," says Bishop Taylor, "wisdom, and mercy, and justice, and simplicity, and holiness, and purity, and meekness, and contentedness, and charity, be images of God, and rays of Divinity, then that doctrine, in which all these shine so gloriously, and in which nothing else is ingredient, must needs be from God. If the holy Jesus had come into the world with less splendor of power

and mighty demonstrations, yet the excellency of what he taught makes him alone fit to be THE MASTER OF THE WORLD."

(Moral Demonstration of the Truth of the Christian Religion.)

INTERNAL EVIDENCE of the truth of the Scriptures may also be collected from their style. It is various, and thus accords with the profession, that the whole is a collection of books by different individuals; each has his own peculiarity so strongly marked, and so

equally sustained throughout the book or books ascribed to him, as to be a forcible proof of genuineness. The style of Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, the evangelists, and St. Paul, are all strikingly different. The writers of the New Testament employ Hebrew idioms, words, and phrases. The Greek in which they wrote, is not classical Greek; but, as it is observed by Bishop Marsh, "is such a dialect as would be used by persons educated in a country where Chaldee or Syriac

was spoken as the vernacular tongue; but who also acquired a knowledge of Greek by frequent intercourse with strangers." This therefore affords an argument from internal evidence, that the books were written by the persons whose names they bear; and it has been shown by the same prelate, that as this particular style was changed after the destruction of Jerusalem, the same compound language could not be written in any other age than the first century, and proof is obtained from this

source also in favor of the antiquity of the Scriptures of the New Testament.

An argument to the same point of antiquity is drawn by MICHAELIS from the accordancy of the evangelic history and the apostolical epistles with the history and manners of the age to which they refer. "A Greek or Roman Christian," he observes, "who lived in the second or third century, though as well versed in the writings of the ancients as Eustathius or Asconius, would still have been wanting in Jewish

literature; and a Jewish convert in those ages, even the most learned rabbi, would have been equally deficient in the knowledge of Greece and Rome. If then the New Testament, thus exposed to detection, (had it been an imposture,) is found, after the severest researches, to harmonize with the history, the manners, and the op inions of the first century, and since the more minutely we inquire, the more perfect we find the coincidence, we must conclude that it was beyond the reach of human

abilities to effectuate so wonderful a deception."

The manner of the sacred writers is also in proof, that they were conscious of the truth of what they relate. The whole narrative is simple and natural. Even in the accounts given of the creation, the flood, the exodus from Egypt, and the events of the life and death of Christ, where designing men would have felt most inclined to endeavor to heighten the impression by glowing and elaborate description, the same chastened simplicity is

preserved. "These sober recorders of events the most astonishing are never carried away, by the circumstances they relate, into any pomp of diction, into any use of superlatives. There is not, perhaps, in the whole Gospel a single interjection, not an exclamation, nor any artifice to call the reader's attention to the marvels of which the relaters were the witnesses. Absorbed in their holy task, no alien idea presents itself to their mind: the object before them fills it. They never

digress; are never called away by the solicitations of vanity, or the suggestions of curiosity. No image starts up to divert their attention. There is, indeed, in the Gospels much imagery, much allusion, much allegory, but they proceed from their Lord, and are recorded as his. The writers never fill up the intervals between events. They leave circumstances to make their own impression, instead of helping out the reader by any reflections of their own. They always feel the holy 'ground on which

they stand. They preserve the gravity of history and the severity of truth, without enlarging the outline or swelling the expression.'" (Mrs. MORE'S Character of St Paul.)

Another source of INTERNAL EVIDENCE, arising from incidental coincidences, which, from

"their latency and minuteness," must be supposed to have their foundation in truth, is opened, and ably illustrated by Dr. Paley, in his "Horae Paulinae," a

work which will well repay the perusal.

Much of the COLLATERAL EVIDENCE of the truth of the Scriptures generally, and of Christianity in particular, has been anticipated in the course of this discussion, and need not again be resumed. The agreement of the final revelation of the will of God, by the ministry of Christ and his apostles, with former authenticated revelations, has been pointed out; so that the whole constitutes one body of harmonious doctrines,

gradually introduced, and at length fully unfolded and confirmed. The suitableness of the Christian revelation to the state of the world, at the time of its communication, follows from the view we have given of the necessity, not only of a revelation generally, but of such a revelation as the mercy of God has vouchsafed to the world through his Son. It has also been shown, that its historical facts accord with the credible histories and traditions of the same time; that monuments remain to attest its truth, in

the institutions of the Christian Church; and that adversaries have made concessions in its favor. (4) Our farther remarks on this subject, though many other interesting particulars might be embraced, must be confined to two particulars, but each of a very convincing character. The first is the marvelous diffusion of Christianity in the three first centuries; the second is, the actual beneficial effect produced, and which is still producing, by Christianity upon mankind.

(4) The collateral testimony to certain facts mentioned in Scripture, from coins, medals, and ancient marbles, may be seen well applied in HORNE'S Introduction to the Study of the Scriptures, vol. i, p. 238.

With respect to the first, the fact to be accounted for is, that the first preachers of the Gospel, though unsupported by human power, and uncommended by philosophic wisdom, and even in opposition to both, succeeded in effecting a revolution in the

opinions and manners of a great portion of the civilized world, to which there is no parallel in the history of mankind. (5)

"Though aspersed by the slander of the malicious, and exposed to the sword of the powerful, in a short period of time they induced multitudes of various nations, who were equally distinguished by the peculiarity of their manners, and the diversity of their language, to forsake the religion of their ancestors. The converts whom they made deserted

ceremonies and institutions, which were defended by vigorous authority, sanctified by remote age, and associated with the most alluring gratification of the passions." (KETT'S Sermons at the Bampton Lecture.) (5) The success of Mohammed, though sometimes pushed forward as a parallel, is, in fact, both as to the means employed and the effect produced, a perfect contrast. The means were conquest and compulsion; the effect was to legalize and sanctify, so to speak,

the natural passions of men for plunder and sensual gratification; and it surely argues either a very frail judgment, or a criminal disposition, to object, that a contrast so marked should ever have been exhibited as a correspondence. Men were persuaded, when they were not, forced, to join the ranks of the Arabian impostor by the hope of plunder, and a present and future life of brutal gratification.

Men were persuaded to join the apostles by the

evidence of truth, and by the hope of future spiritual blessings, but with the certainty of present disgrace and suffering.

After their death the same doctrines were taught, and the same effects followed, though successive and grievous persecutions were waged against all who professed their faith in Christ, by successive emperors and inferior magistrates. Tacitus, about A. D. 62, speaking of Christianity says, "This pernicious superstition, though checked for a while,

broke out again, and spread not only over Judea, but reached the city of Rome also. At first they only were apprehended who confessed themselves to be of that sect; afterward a vast multitude were discovered, and cruelly punished." Pliny, the governor of Pontus and Bithynia, near eighty years after the death of Christ, in his well-known letter to Trajan, observes, "The contagion of this superstition has not only invaded cities, but the smaller towns also, and the whole country." He speaks

too of the idol temples having been "almost forsaken." To the same effect the Christian fathers speak. About A. D. 140, Justin Martyr writes, "There is not a nation, Greek or Barbarian, or of any other name, even of those who wander in tribes, and live in tents, among whom prayers and thanksgivings are not offered to the Father and Creator of the universe in the name of the crucified Jesus." In A. D. 190, Tertullian, in his Apology, appeals to the Roman governors -

"We were but of yesterday, and we have filled your cities and towns; the camp, the senate, and the forum." In A. D. 220, Origen says, "By the good providence of God, the Christian religion has so flourished and increased, that it is now preached freely, and without molestation." These representations, Gibbon contends, are exaggerations on both sides, produced by the fears of Pliny, and the zeal of the Christian fathers. But even granting some degree of exaggeration arising not designedly from

warm feelings, an unquestionable occurrence proves the futility of the exceptions taken to these statements by the elegant but infidel historian. The great fact is, that in the year A. D. 300, Christianity became the established religi on of the Roman empire, and paganism was abolished: and it follows from this event, that the religion which thus became triumphant after unparalleled trials and sufferings must have established itself, previously to its receiving the sanction of the state, in

the belief of a great majority of the one hundred and twenty millions of people supposed to be contained in the empire, or no emperor would have been insane enough to make the attempt to change the religion of so vast a state, nor, had he made it, could he have succeeded.

The success of Christianity in the three centuries preceding Constantine has justly been considered as in no unimportant sense miraculous, and as such, an illustrious proof of its

Divinity. "The obstacles which opposed the first reception of Christianity were so numerous and formidable, and the human instruments employed for its diffusion so apparently weak and insufficient, that a comparison between them will not only show that the passions and opposition of man, far from impeding the Divine designs, may ultimately become the means of their perfect accomplishment, but will fully demonstrate the Divine origin of Christianity by displaying the powerful assistance

which the Almighty supplied for its establishment." (KETT'S Sermons.) The astonishing success of Christianity under such circumstances, and at so early a period, affords a strong confirmation to the truth of miracles, because it implies them, as no other means can be conceived by which an attention so general should have been excited to a religion which was not only without the sanction of authority and rank, but opposed by both; the scene of whose facts lay in a province the people of

which were despised; and whose doctrines held out nothing but spiritual attainments. By the effect of miracles during the lives of the first preachers, public curiosity was excited, and they obtained an audience which they could not otherwise have commanded. This power of working miracles was transmitted to their successors, and continued until the purposes of Infinite Wisdom were accomplished. They decreased in number in the second century, and left but a few traces at the close

of the third. (6) The increase of Christians implied even more than miracles; such was the holy character of the majority, during the continuance of the reproach and persecutions which followed the Christian name; such the patience with which they suffered, and the fortitude with which they died; that the influence of God upon their hearts is as manifest in the new and hallowed character which distinguished them, and the meek, forgiving, and passive virtues which they

exhibited, to the astonishment of the heathen, as his power in the miracles by which their attention was first drawn to examine that truth which they afterward believed and held fast to death.

(6) Attempts have been made to deny the existence of miraculous powers In the ages immediately succeeding that, of the apostles, but it stands on the unanimous and successive testimony of the fathers. Gibbon, on this subject, has borrowed his objections from "The Free

Inquiry" of Dr. Middleton, whose belief in Christianity is very suspicious. This book received many able answers; but none more so than one by the Rev. John Wesley. It is a triumph to truth to state, that Dr. Middleton felt himself obliged to give up his ground by shifting the question.

The actual effect produced by this new religion upon society, and which it is still producing, is another point in the collateral evidence: for Christianity has not only an adaptation for

improving the condition of society; its excellence is not only to be argued from its effects stated on hypothetical circumstances; but it has actually won its moral victories, and in all ages has exhibited its trophies. In every pagan country where it has prevailed, it has abolished idolatry with its sanguinary and polluted rites. It also effected this mighty revolution, that the sanctions of religion should no longer be in favor of the worst passions and practices, but be directed against them. It has raised

the standard of morality, and by that means, even where its full effects have not been suffered to display themselves, has insensibly improved the manners of every Christian state: what heathen nations are, in point of morals, is now well known; and the information on this subject which for several years past has been increasing, has put it out of the power of infidels to urge the superior manners of either China or Hindustan. It has abolished infanticide and human sacrifices, so prevalent among ancient

and modern heathens; put an end to polygamy and divorce; and, by the institution of marriage in an indissoluble bond, has given birth to a felicity and sanctity in the domestic circle which it never before knew. It has exalted the condition and character of woman, and by that means has humanized man; given refinement and delicacy to society; and created a new and important affection in the human breast-the love of woman founded on esteem; an affection generally unknown to heathens the most refined.

(7) It abolished domestic slavery in ancient Europe; and from its principles the struggle which is now maintained with African slavery draws its energy, and promises a triumph as complete. It has given a milder character to war, and taught modern nations to treat their prisoners with humanity, and to restore them by exchange to their respective countries. It has laid the basis of a jurisprudence more just and equal; given civil rights to subjects, and placed restraints on absolute power; and crowned its

achievements by its charity. Hospitals, schools, and many other institutions for the aid of the aged and the poor, are almost exclusively its own creations, and they abound most where its influence is most powerful. The same effects to this day are resulting from its influence in those heathen countries into which the Gospel has been carried by missionaries sent out from this and other Christian states. In some of them idolatry has been renounced; infants, and widows, and aged persons

who would have been immolated to their gods or abandoned by their cruelty, have been preserved, and are now "the living to praise its Divine Author, as they do at this day." In other instances the light is prevailing against the darkness; and those systems of dark and sanguinary superstition which have stood for ages only to pollute and oppress, without any symptom of decay, now betray the shocks they have sustained by the preaching of the Gospel of Christ, and nod to their final fall. (8)

(7) Among the Greeks, the education of women was chiefly confined to courtesans.

(8) For an ample illustration of the actual effects of Christianity upon society, see Bishop PORTEUS'S Beneficial Effects of Christianity, and RYAN'S History of the Effects of Religion on Mankind.

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20 MISCELLANEOUS OBJECTIONS ANSWERED

The system of revealed religion contained in the Old and New Testaments, being opposed to the natural corrupt inclinations, and often to the actual practice of men; laying them under rules to which they are averse; threatening them with a result which they dread; holding out to them no pleasures but such as they distaste, and no advantages but those which they would gladly exchange for a

perpetual life of sinful indulgence on earth; will be regarded by many of the most reflecting among them as a system of restraint; and must therefore often excite either direct hostility, or a disposition to encourage and admit suggestions tending to weaken its authority. It may be added that, as the Scriptures cannot be known without careful examination, which implies a serious habit not to be found in the majority, objections have been often raised by ingenious men in great ignorance of the

volume itself against which they are directed; and being sometimes urged on the ground of some popular view of a fact or doctrine, they have been received as carelessly as they were uttered. Philosophers too have some-times constructed hasty theories on various subjects, which have either contradicted or been thought to contradict some parts of the Scriptures; and the array of science, and the fascination of novelty, have equally deceived and misled the theorist himself and his disciples. Since the

revival of letters, and in countries where freedom of discussion has been allowed, objectors have arisen, and numerous attempts have been made to shake the faith of mankind. That specious kind of infidelity known by the name of "Deism," made its appearance in Italy and France about the middle of the sixteenth century, and in England early in the seventeenth. Under this appellation, and that of

"The Religion of Nature," each adopted to deceive the unwary, the attack upon

Christianity was at first cautious, and accompanied with many professions of regard for its manifold excellencies.

Lord HERBERT of Cherbury was the first who in this country advocated this system. He lays down five primary articles of religion, as containing everything necessary to be believed; and as he contends they are all discoverable by our natural faculties, they supersede, he informs us, the necessity of a revelation. They are-that there is a supreme

God-that he is chiefly to be worshipped-that piety and virtue are the principal part of his worship-that repentance expiates offence-and that there is a state of future rewards and punishments. The history of infidelity from this time is a striking comment upon the words of St. Paul, "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived;" for, in the progress of this deadly error, all Lord Herbert's five articles of natural religion have been questioned or given up by

those who followed him in his fundamental principle, "that nothing can be admitted which is not discoverable by our natural faculties." HOBBES, who succeeded next in this warfare against the Bible, if he acknowledges that there is a God, represents him as corporeal, and our duty to him as a chimera, the civil magistrate being supreme in all things both civil and sacred.

SHAFTESBURY insists that the doctrine of rewards and punishments is degrading to the

understanding and detrimental to moral virtue. HUME denies the relation between cause and effect, and thus attempts to overthrow the argument for the existence of God from the frame of the universe. By others the worship of God, which Lord Herbert advocates, has been rejected as unreasonable, because he needs not our praises, and is not to be turned from his purposes by our prayers. As all law, of Divine authority, is on this system renounced, so "piety and virtue" must be understood

to be what every man chooses to consider them, which amounts to their annihilation; and as for future reward and punishment, philosophy, since Lord Herbert's days, has discovered that the soul of man is material; or rather, being a mere result of the organization of the body, that it dies with it. The great principle of the English proto-infidel, "the sufficiency of our natural faculties to form a religion for ourselves, and to decide upon the merits of revealed truth," is, however, the principle of all; and this

being once conceded, the instances just given are sufficiently in proof that the cable is slipped, and that everyone is left to take his course wherever the winds and the currents may impel his unpiloted, uncharted, and uncompassed bark.

This grand principle of error, between which and absolute Atheism there are but a few steps, has been largely refuted in the foregoing pages, and the claims of the Holy Scriptures to be considered as a revelation from God,

established by arguments, the force of which in all other cases is felt, and acknowledged, and acted upon even by unbelievers themselves. If this has been done satisfactorily, the objections which remain are of little weight, were they even less capable of being repelled; and if no answer can be found to some of the difficulties which may be urged, this circumstance is much more in accordance with the truth of a revelation, than it would be with its falsehood. "We do not deny," says an excellent

writer on the evidences of Christianity, (Dr. OLINTHUS GREGORY,) "that the scheme of revelation has its difficulties; for if the things of nature are often difficult to comprehend, it would be strange indeed if supernatural matters were so simple, and obvious, and suited to finite capacities, as never to startle and puzzle us at all. He, who denies the Bible to have come from God because of these difficulties, may for exactly the same reason deny that the world was formed by him."

The mere cavils of infidel writers may be hastily dismissed; the most plausible objections shall be considered more at large. As to the former, few of them could have been urged if those who have adduced them had consulted the works of commentators, and Biblical critics, writings with which it is evident they have little acquaintance; and thus they have shown how ill-disposed they have been to become fully acquainted with the subjects which they have subjected to their criticism. To this may be

added their ignorance of the idiom of the Hebrew, the language of the Old Testament; their inattention to the ancient manners and customs of the countries where the sacred writers lived, to occasional errors in the transcription of numerous copies which may be rectified by collation, and to the different readings, which, to a candid criticism, would generally furnish the solution of the difficulty.

The Bible has been vehemently assaulted,

because it represents God as giving command to the Israelites to exterminate the nations of Canaan; but a few remarks will be sufficient to prove how little weight there is in the charges which, on this account, have been made against the author of the Pentateuch. The objection cannot be argued upon the mere ground that it is contrary to the Divine justice or mercy to cut off a people indiscriminately, from the eldest to the youngest, since this is done in earthquakes, pestilences, &c. The cholera morbus,

which has been for four years past wasting various parts of Asia, has probably destroyed half a million of persons of all ages. The character of the God of nature is not therefore contradicted by that ascribed to the God of the Bible. The whole objection resolves itself into this question: Was it consistent with the character of God to employ human agents in this work of destruction? Who can prove that it was not? No one; and yet here lies the whole stress of the objection. The Jews were not rendered more cruel by

their being so commissioned; for we find them much more merciful in their institutions than other ancient nations;- nor can this instance be pleaded in favor of exterminating wars, for there was in the case a special commission for a special purpose, and by that it was limited. Other considerations are also to be included. The sins of the Canaanites were of so gross a nature, that it was necessary to mark them with signal punishments for the benefit of surrounding nations; the

employing of the Israelites as instruments under a special and publicly proclaimed commission, connected the punishment more visibly with the offence, than if it had been inflicted by the array of warring elements, while the Israelites themselves would be more deeply impressed with the guilt of idolatry, and its ever accompanying polluted and sanguinary rites; and finally the Canaanites had been long spared, and in the meantime both warned by partial judgments, and reproved by the remaining

adherents of the patriarchal religion who resided among them.

Thus the objection rests upon no foundation. The destruction of infants, so often dwelt upon, takes place in nature and providence; the objection to the employment of human agents, arising from habits of inhumanity being thereby induced, assumes what is false in fact; for this effect upon the Jews was prevented by the circumstance of their knowing that they acted as ministers of the Divine

displeasure, and under his commission; and some important reasons may be discovered for executing the judgment by men, and especially this, that it might exhibit the evil of a sanguinary and obscene idolatry.

That law in Deuteronomy, which authorizes parents, the father and the mother, to bring "a stubborn and rebellious son," who was also "a glutton and a drunkard," before the elders of the city, that, if guilty, he might be stoned, has been called inhuman

and brutal. In point of fact, it was, however, a merciful regulation. In almost all ancient nations, parents had the power of taking away the lives of their children. This was a branch of the old patriarchal authority which did not all at once merge into the kingly governments which were afterward established. There is reason therefore to believe that it was possessed by the heads of families among the Israelites, and that this was the first attempt to control it, by obliging the crimes alleged against their

children to be proved before regular magistrates, and thus preventing the effects of unbridled passions.

The intentional offering of Isaac by Abraham has also had its share of censure. The answer is, 1. That Abraham, who was in the habit of sensible communication with God, could have no doubt of the Divine command, and of the right of God to take away the life he had given. 2. That he proceeded to execute the command of God, in faith, as the Apostle

Paul has stated that God would raise his son from the dead. The whole transaction was extraordinary, and cannot therefore be judged by common rules; and it could only be fairly objected to, if it had been so stated as to encourage human sacrifices. Here, however, are sufficient guards; an indubitable Divine command was given; the sacrifice was prevented by the same authority; and the history stands in a book which represents human sacrifices as an abomination to God.

Indelicacy and immodesty have been charged upon some parts of the Scriptures. This objection has something in it which indicates malignity, rather than an honest and principled exception: for in no instance are any statements made in order to incite impurity; and nothing, throughout the whole Scripture, is represented as more offensive to God, or as more certainly excluding persons from the kingdom of heaven, than the unlawful gratification of the senses. It is also to be

noted, that many of the passages objected to are in the laws and prohibitions of both Testaments, and as well might the statute and common law of this country be the subject of reprehension, and be held up as tending to encourage vices of various kinds, because they must, with more or less of circumstantiality, describe them. We are farther to take into account the simplicity of manners and language in early times. We observe, even among the peasantry of modern states, a language, on the subjects

referred to, which is more direct, and what refined society would call gross; but greater real indelicacy does not necessarily follow. Countries and classes of people might be pointed out; where the language which expresses sensual indulgence has more of caution and of periphrasis, while the known facts show that their morals are exceedingly polluted.

Several objections which have been raised against characters and transactions in the books of Judges, Samuel, and Kings, are

dissipated by the single consideration, that where they are obviously immoral or unjustifiable they are never approved; and are merely stated as facts of history. The conduct of Ehud, of Samson, and of Jephthah, may be given as instances.

The advice of David, when on his death bed, respecting Joab and Shimei, has been attributed to his private resentment. This is not the fact. He spoke in his character of king and magistrate, and gave his advice on public

grounds, as committing the kingdom to his son.

The conduct of David also toward the Ammonites, in putting them "under saws and harrows of iron," has been the subject of severe animadversion. But the expression means no more than that he employed them in laborious works, as sawing, making iron harrows, hewing wood, and making bricks, the Hebrew prefix signifying to as well as under. "He put them to saws and harrows of iron (some render it iron mines,) and to axes of iron,

and made them to pass through the brick kiln."

With respect to the imprecations found in many parts of Scripture and which have been represented as expressions of revenge and malice, it has been often and satisfactorily observed, that they are predictions and not anathemas, the imperative mood being put for the future tense, according to the Hebrew idiom.

These have been adduced as specimens of the objections urged by infidel

writers against the Scriptures, and of the ease with which they may be met. For others of a similar kind, and for answers to objections founded upon supposed contradictions between different passages of Scripture, reference must be made to commentators. (9) With respect to all of them, it has been well observed, "that a little skill in the original languages of the Scriptures, their idioms and properties, and in the times, occasions, and scope of the several books, as well as in the antiquities and

customs of those countries which were the scenes of the transactions recorded, will always clear the main difficulties."

(9) See also a copious collection of these supposed contradictions, with judicious explanations, in the Appendix to vol. i, of HORNE'S Introduction, &c

To some other objections of a philosophical kind, as being of a more imposing aspect, the answers may be more extended.

Between natural philosophy and revelation-the book of nature and the book of God-it has been a favorite practice with unbelievers to institute a contrast, and to set the plainness and uncontradictory character of the one against the mysteries and difficulties of the other. The common ground, on which all such objections rest, is an unwillingness to admit as truth, and to receive as established and authorized doctrine, what is incomprehensible. They contend, that if a revelation

has been made, there can be no mystery in it, for that is a contradiction; and that if mysteries, that is, things incomprehensible, are held to be a part of it, this is fatal to its claims as a revelation. The sophism is easily answered. Many doctrines, many duties, are comprehensible enough; no mystery at all is involved in them; and as to incomprehensible sublets, nothing is more undoubted, as we have already shown, than that a fact may be the subject of revelation, as that God is eternal and omnipresent,

and still remain mysterious and incomprehensible. The fact itself is not hidden, or expressed in language or symbol so equivocal as to throw the meaning into difficulty, the only sense in which the argument could be valid. As a fact, it is clearly revealed that these are attributes of the Divine Nature; but both, notwithstanding that clear and indubitable revelation, are still incomprehensible. It is not revealed HOW God is eternal and omnipresent, nor is such a revelation pretended; but it is revealed THAT HE is so-

not HOW a trinity of persons exists in unity of essence; but THAT SUCH is the mode of the Divine existence. If however men hesitate to admit incomprehensible subjects as matters of faith, they cannot be permitted to fly for relief from revelation to philosophy, and much less to set up its superior claims, as to clearness of manifestation, to the Holy Scriptures. There too it will be seen, that mystery and revelation go inseparably together; that he who will not admit the mystery cannot have the benefit of

the revelation; and that he who takes the revelation of facts, embraces at the same time the mystery of their causes. The facts, for instance, of the attraction of gravitation, of cohesion, of electricity, of magnetism, of coagulation, of thawing, of evaporation, are all admitted. The experimental and inductive philosophy of modern times has made many revelations of the relations and in some instances of the proximate causes of these phenomena; but the real causes are all confessedly hidden. With

respect to mechanics, says a writer who has devoted his life to philosophical studies, (Dr. GREGORY'S Letters on the Christian Religion,)

"this science is conversant about force, matter, time, motion, space; each of these has occasioned the most elaborate disquisitions, and the most violent disputes. Let it be asked, what is force? If the answerer be candid, his reply will be, 'I cannot tell so as to satisfy every inquirer, or so as to enter into the essence of the

thing.' Again, what is matter? 'I cannot tell.' What is motion? 'I cannot tell;'" and so of the rest. "The fact of the communication of motion from one body to another is as inexplicable as the communication of Divine influences. How, then, can the former be admitted with any face, while the latter is denied solely on the ground of its incomprehensibility?

"But perhaps I may be told, that although things which are incomprehensible occur in our physical and

mixed inquiries, they have no place in ' pure mathematics, where all is not only demonstrable, but intelligible.' This, again, is an assertion which I cannot admit; and for the denial of which I shall beg leave to produce my reasons, as this will, I apprehend, make still more in favor of my general argument. Now, here it is known, geometricians can demonstrate that there are curves which approach continually to some fixed right line, without the possibility of ever meeting it. Such, for example, are

hyperbolas, which continually approach toward their asymptotes, but cannot possibly meet them, unless an assignable finite space can become equal to nothing. Such, again, are conchoids, which continually approach to their directrices, yet can never meet them, unless a certain point can be both beyond and in contact with a given line at the same moment. Mathematicians can also demonstrate that a space infinite in one sense, may, by its rotation, generate a solid of finite capacity; as is the case with

the solid formed by the rotation of a logarithmic curve of infinite length upon its axis, or that formed by the rotation of an Apollonian hyperbola upon its asymptote. They can also show in numerous instances, that a variable space shall be continually augmenting, and yet never become equal to a certain finite quantity; and they frequently make transformations with great facility and neatness, by means of expressions to which no definite ideas can be attached. Can we, for example, obtain any clear

comprehension, or indeed any notion at all, of the value of a power whose exponent is an acknowledged imaginary quantity, as x v-1? Can we, in like manner, obtain any distinct idea of a series constituted of an infinite number of terms? In each case the answer, I am convinced, must be in the negative. Yet the science, in which these and numerous other incomprehensibles occur, is called Mathesis, THE DISCIPLINE, because of its incomparable superiority to other studies in evidence and certainty,

and, therefore, its singular adaptation to discipline the mind. How does it happen, now, that when the investigation is bent toward objects which cannot be comprehended, the mind arrives at that in which it acquiesces as certainty, and rests satisfied? It is not, manifestly, because we have a distinct perception of the nature of the objects of the inquiry; (for that is precluded by the supposition, and, indeed, by the preceding statement,) but because we have such a distinct

perception of the relation which those objects bear one toward another, and can assign positively, without danger of error, the exact relation, as to identity or diversity, of the quantities before us, at every step of the process."

Modern astronomy has displayed the immense extent of the universe and by analogical reasoning has made it probable, at least, that the planets of our and of other systems may be inhabited by rational and moral beings like ourselves; and from these

premises infidel philosophy has argued with apparent humility for the insignificance of the human race, and the improbability of supposing that a Divine person should have been sent into this world for its instruction and salvation, when, in comparison with the solar system, it is but a point, and that system itself, in comparison of the universe, may be nothing more.

Plausible as this may appear, nothing can have less weight, even if only the

philosophy and not the theology of the case be taken into Consideration. The intention with which man is thus compared with the universe is to prove his insignificance; and the comparison must be made either between man and the vastness of planetary and stellar matter, or between the number of mankind, and the number of supposed planetary inhabitants. If the former, we may reply with Dr. Beattie, "Great extent is a thing so striking to our imagination, that sometimes, in the moment

of forgetfulness, we are apt to think nothing can be important but what is of vast corporeal magnitude. And yet, even to our apprehension, when we are willing to be rational, how much more sublime and more interesting an object is a mind like that of Newton, than the unwieldy force and brutal stupidity of such a monster as the poets describe Polyphemus? Who, that had it in his power, would scruple to destroy a whale in order to save a child? Nay, when compared with the happiness of one

immortal mind, the greatest imaginable accumulation of inanimate substance must appear an insignificant thing. ' If we consider,' says Bentley, 'the dignity of an intelligent being, and put that in the scale against brute and inanimate matter, we may affirm, without overvaluing human nature, that the soul of one virtuous man is of greater worth and excellency, than the sun and his planets, and all the stars in the world.! Let us not then make bulk the standard of value; or judge of the importance of man

from the weight of his body, or from the size or situation of the planet that is now his place of abode."

To the same effect an ingenious and acute writer remarks upon a passage in Saussure, (Voyages dans les Alpes,) who speaks of men in the phrase of the modern philosophy, as "the little beings which crawl upon the surface of the earth," and as shrinking into nothing both as to "space and time," in comparison with the vast mountains and "the great

epochs of nature." "If," says Mr.

Granville Penn, (Comparative Estimate of the Mineral and Mosaic Geologies,) "there is any sense or virtue in this reflection, it must consist in duly estimating the relative importance of the two magnitudes and durations, and in concluding logically, the comparative insignificancy of the smaller. And it will then necessarily follow, that the insignificancy of the smaller would lessen, in the same proportion in

which it might increase in bulk. If the little beings therefore were to be magnified in the proportions of 2, 3, 4, &c, their insignificancy, relatively to the great features of the globe, would necessarily diminish in the same ratio. The smaller the disproportion between the man and the mountain, the less would be the relative insignificance of the former; and although the increase of magnitude in the smaller object be ever so inconsiderable, yet if it is positive and real, its dignity must be

proportionately increased in the true nature of things: the bigger the being that crawls upon the surface of this globe, the less absurd would be the supposition that he is the final object of this terrestrial creation. The Irish giant, therefore, whose altitude exceeded the measure of eight feet, would exceed in relative dignity, by the same proportion, BACON and NEWTON, whose height did not attain to six feet. If this is nonsense, then must that also be nonsense from which it is the genuine conclusion: viz. that the

material magnitudes of the little beings, or their duration upon the earth on which they 'crawl determines, in any manner, their importance, in the creation, relatively to the primordial mountains which arise above it, or to the extent of the regions which may be surveyed from their summits. For if the same physically small beings possess another magnitude, which can be brought to another and a different scale of computation from that of physical or material magnitude; a scale

infinitely surpassing in importance the greatest measures of that magnitude; then there will be nothing astonishing or irrational in the supposition, that the highest mountains, and the widest regions, and the entire system to which they pertain, may be subservient to the ends of those beings, and to that other system to which they pertain; which latter will thus be found superior in importance to the former. Such a scale is that, by which the intelligent, moral, and immortal

nature of MAN is to be measured, and which the sacred historian calls, a formation 'after the image and likeness of GOD;' a scale so little taken into the contemplation of the science of mere physics. As soon, however, as that moral scale of magnitude once supersedes the physical scale in the apprehension of the mind; as soon as the mind perceives, that the duration of that intelligent moral nature infinitely exceeds the vastest' epochal of nature' which the imagination of the mineral

geology can represent to itself, and that, though the physical nature of man is limited to a very small measure of time, yet his moral nature is unlimited in time, and will outlast all the mountains of the globe; it then perceives, at the same moment, the counterfeit quality of the reflection, which at first appeared so sublime and so humble, so profound and so devout. The sublimity and humility betray themselves to be the disparagement and degradation of our nature; the profundity is found to

be mere surface, and the devotion to be a retrocession from the light of revelation."

If the comparison of man with mere material magnitude will not then support this effort to effect his degradation, and to shame him out of his trust in the loving kindness of his God; if the comparison be made between things which have no relations in common, and is therefore absurd; as little will it serve this unnatural attempt to prostrate man to an insect rank, and to inspire him

with reptile feelings, to conclude his insignificance from the number of other beings.

For it is plain that their number alters not his real character; he is still immortal, though myriads beside him are immortal, and still he has his deep capacity of pleasure and of pain. Unless, therefore, it could be proved that the care of God for each must be diminished as the number of his creatures is increased; there is, as Mr. Penn has stated it, neither "sense nor virtue" in such

reflections upon the littleness of man; and they imply, indeed, a base and an unworthy reflection upon the supreme Creator himself, as though he could not bestow upon all the beings he has made a care and a love adequate to their circumstances. What man is with respect to God can only be collected from the Divine procedures toward him; and these are sufficient to excite the devout exclamations of the psalmist, "what is man that THOU art MINDFUL of him? or the son of man that THOU VISITEST

him?" That he has not only been made by God, but that he is governed by his providence, none but Atheists will deny; but any argument drawn from such premises as the above would conclude as forcibly against providence, as it can be made to conclude against redemption. "Our Savior," says Dr. Beattie, "as if to obviate objections of this nature, expresses most emphatically the superintending care of Providence, when he teaches that it is God who adorns the grass of the field, that without him a

sparrow falls not on the ground, and that even the hairs of our head are numbered. Yet this is no exaggeration; but must, if God is omniscient and almighty, be literally true. By a stupendous exuberance of animal, vegetable, and mineral production, and by an apparatus still more stupendous (if that were possible) for the distribution of light and heat, he supplies the means of life and comfort to the short-lived inhabitants of this globe. Can it then appear incredible; nay,

does not this consideration render it in the highest degree probable, that he has also prepared the means of eternal happiness for beings, whom he has formed for eternal duration, whom he has endowed with faculties so noble as those of the human soul, and for whose accommodation chiefly, during their present state of trial, he has provided all the magnificence of this sublunary world?"

There is, however, another consideration, which gives a sublime and

overwhelming grandeur to the Scripture view of the redemption of the race of man, and of which, for the want of acquaintance with our sacred writings, infidel philosophers appear never to have entertained the least conception. It is the moral connection of this world with the whole universe of intelligent creatures; and the "intention" there was in the Divine mind to convey to other beings, by the history and great results of his moral government over one branch of his universal family, a view of his own

perfections; of the duties and dangers of created and finite beings; of transgression and holiness, in their principles and in their effects; by a course of action so much more influential than abstract truth. Intimations of this great and impressive view are found in various passages of the New Testament, and it opens a scene of inconceivable moral magnificence - "To the intent, that to the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church the

manifold wisdom of God." (1)

(1) "In this our first period of existence, our eye cannot penetrate beyond the present scene, and the human race appears one great and separate community; but with other worlds, and other communities, we probably may, and every argument for the truth of our religion gives us reason to think that we shall, be connected hereafter. And if by our behavior we may, even while here, as our Lord positively affirms, heighten

in some degree the felicity of angels, our salvation may hereafter be a matter of importance, not to us only, but to many other orders of immortal beings.

They, it is true, will not suffer for our guilt, nor be rewarded for our obedience. But it is not absurd to imagine, that our fall and recovery may be useful to them as an example; and that the Divine grace manifested in our redemption may raise their adoration and gratitude into higher raptures, and quicken their

ardor to inquire with ever new delight, into the dispensations of infinite wisdom. This is not mere conjecture. It derives plausibility from many analogies in nature, as well as from Holy Writ, which represents the mystery of our redemption as an object of curiosity to superior beings, and our repentance as an occasion of their joy." (Dr. BEATTIE'S

Evidences of the Christian Religion See also DR. CHALMERS'S Discourses

on the Modern Astronomy.)

It has been objected to the Mosaic chronology, that it fixes the era of creation only about four thousand years earlier than the Christian era; and against this, evidence has been brought from two sources- the chronology of certain ancient nations, and the structure of the earth.

The objections drawn from the former of these sources have of late rapidly weakened, and are in fact given up by many whose deference to the authority

of Scripture is very slight, though but a few years ago nothing was more confidently urged by skeptical writers than the refutation of Moses by the Chinese, Hindu, and Egyptian chronologies, founded, as it was then stated, on very ancient astronomical observations preserved to the present day. It is however now clearly proved, that the astronomical tables, from which it has been attempted to assign a prodigious antiquity to the Hindus, have been calculated backward;

(CUVIER'S Theory of the Earth;) and among the Chinese the earliest astronomical observation that appears to rest upon good grounds, is now found to be one made not more than two thousand nine hundred years ago. (CUVIER'S

Theory of the Earth.) As for the conclusion drawn from the supposed zodiacs in the temples of Esneh and Dendara in Egypt, it is now strongly doubted whether the figures represented upon them are astronomical or

mythological, that is, whether they are zodiacs at all. Their astronomical character is strongly denied by Dr. Richardson, a late traveler, who examined them with great care; and who gives large reasons for his opinion. Even if the astronomical character of these assumed zodiacs be allowed, they are found to prove nothing. M. Biot, an eminent French mathematician, has recently fixed the date of the oldest of them at only seven hundred and sixteen years before Christ.

Against the excessive antiquity assigned to some ancient states, or claimed by them, the science of geology has at length entered its protest; and though, as we shall presently see, it has originated chronological objections to the Mosaic date of the creation, on the origin of nations it has made a full concession to the history of the Scriptures. Cuvier observes - "By a careful investigation of what has taken place on the surface of the globe since it has been laid dry for the last time, and its

continents have assumed their present form, at least in such parts as are somewhat elevated above the level of the ocean, it may be clearly seen that this revolution, and consequently the establishment of our existing societies, could not have been very ancient." (Theory of the Earth.) D'Aubuisson remarks, "that the soils of all the plains were deposited in the bosom of a tranquil water; that their actual order is only to be dated from the retreat of that water; and that the date of

that period is not very ancient." (Traite de Geognosie.) "Dolomieu, Saussure, De Luc, and the most distinguished naturalists of the age, have coincided in this conclusion, to which they have been led by the evidence of various monuments and natural chronometers which the earth exhibits; and which remain perpetual vouchers for the veracity of the Mosaic chronology, with respect to the epochs of the revolution which the Mosaical history relates." (2)

(2) PENN'S Comparative Estimate, &c. Professor Jamieson, in his Mineralogical Illustrations of Cuvier's Theory, observes, "The front of Salisbury Craigs near Edinburgh, affords a fine example of the natural chronometer, described in the text. The acclivity is covered with loose masses that have fallen from the hill itself; and the quantity of debris is in proportion to the time which has elapsed since the waters of the ocean formerly covered the neighboring country. If a vast period of time had

elapsed since the surface of the earth had assumed its present aspect, it is evident that long ere now the whole of this hill would have been enveloped in its own debris. We have here then a proof of the comparatively short period since the waters left the surface of the globe, - a period not exceeding a few thousand years."

From the absence of all counter evidence in the records of ancient nations, as well as from these philosophical conclusions, which are to be considered

in the light of concessions made to the chronology of the Pentateuch, we may therefore conclude, that, as to the origin of nations and the period of the general deluge, the testimony of Scripture remains unshaken.

Geology has, however, objected to the Mosaic date of the creation of the earth, which it is said affords a period too limited to account for various phenomena which modern researches have brought under consideration. To the last general inundation

of the earth, it is allowed, that no higher a date can be assigned than that which Moses ascribes to the flood of Noah; but several revolutions, each of which has changed the surface of the earth, are contended for, separated from each other by long intervals of time; and, above all, it is assumed, that the elements of the primitive earths were contained in an "original chaotic fluid," and that, in obeying the laws of the affinity of composition, they coalesced and grouped themselves together in

different manners, and settled themselves into order, according to certain laws of matter after an unassignable series of ages. These are the views of Cuvier, D'Aubuisson, De Luc, and other eminent writers on this subject; and whatever they themselves might intend, they have been made use of by infidels to discredit the authority of the sacred historian. It has been replied, that the Bible not being intended to teach philosophy, it is not fair to try it by a philosophical standard. This however

cannot be maintained in the case before us, though the observation is pertinent in others, as when the sun is said to have stood still, popular language being adopted to render the Scriptures intelligible. If Moses professes by Divine inspiration to give an account of the manner in which the world was framed, he must describe the facts as they occurred; and if he has assigned a date to its creation out of nothing, that date, if given by an infallible authority, cannot be contradicted by true philosophy.

To allow time sufficient for the gradual processes of "precipitation and crystallization," by which the first formations of the solid earth are said to have been effected, others have conceded to the geologists of this class, that an antiquity of the earth much higher than that which appears on the face of the Mosaic account may be allowed without contradicting it, and be even deduced from it. They therefore interpret the "days" mentioned in the first chapter of Genesis as successive periods of ages,

and the evening and morning of those days are made the beginnings and ends of those imagined periods. (3) This interpretation is, however, too forced to be admitted in the case of so simple a narrative as that of Moses; and there would be as good a reason for thus extending the duration of the term "day" whenever it occurs in his writings to an indefinite period, to the destruction of all chronological accuracy and of all sobriety of writing. No true friend of revelation will wish to see Moses defended against

the assaults of philosophy in a manner which, by obliging us to find a meaning in his writings far remote from the view of general readers, would render them inapplicable to the purpose of ordinary instruction. Beside, if we are to understand the first day to have been of indefinite length, a hundred, or a thousand, or a million of years, for instance, why not the seventh, the Sabbath also? This opinion cannot therefore be consistently maintained, and we must conclude with

Rosenmuller, "Dies intelligendi sunt naturales, quorum unusquisque ab una vespera incipiens, altera terminatur; quo modo Judaei, et multi alii antiquissimi populi, dies numerarunt-that we are to understand natural days; each of which commencing from one evening is terminated by the next; in which manner the Jews, and many others of the most ancient nations, reckoned days."

(3) "Most readers have presumed, that every night and day mentioned in the

first chapter of Genesis must be strictly confined to the term of twenty-four hours, though there can be no doubt but that Moses never intended any such thing; for how could Moses intend to limit the duration of the day to its present length, before, according to his own showing, the sun had begun to divide the day from the night?" (MANTELL'S Geology of Sussex.) By other believers in revelation who have allowed the two principles laid down by geologists to go unquestioned, viz. the original liquidity of the

earth, holding the elements of all the subsequent formations in a state of solution; and the necessity of a long course of ages to complete those processes by which the earth should be brought into a fit state, so to speak, for the work of the six days, which in that case must be confined to mere arrangement; another, and certainly a less objectionable interpretation of Moses than that which makes his natural days and nights terms for indefinite periods of time, has been adopted. "Does Moses ever say, that

when God created the heavens and the earth, he did more at the time alluded to than transform them out of previously existing materials? Or does he ever say, that there was not an interval of many ages between the first act of creation, described in the first verse of the book of Genesis, and said to have been performed at the beginning; and those more detailed operations the account of which commences at the second verse, and which are described to us as having been performed in so many

days? Or, finally, does he ever make us to understand that the genealogies of man went any farther than to fix the antiquity of the species, and, of consequence, that they left the antiquity of the globe a free subject for the speculations of philosophers? We do not pledge ourselves for the truth of one or all of these suppositions, nor is it necessary we should. It is enough that any of them is infinitely more rational, than the rejection of Christianity in the face of its historical evidence."

(CHALMERS'S Evidences of the Christian Revelation.) "As to the period when this mass was made, Moses only says that it was 'in the beginning,' - a period this, which might have been a million of years before its arrangement." (MANTEILI'S Geology of Sussex.)

To all these suppositions, though not unsupported by the authority of some great critics, there are considerable objections; and if the difficulty of reconciling geological

phenomena with the Mosaic chronology were greater than it appears, none of them ought hastily to be admitted. That creation, in the first verse of Genesis, signifies production out of nothing, and not out of pre-existent matter, though the original word may be used in both senses, is made a matter of faith by the Apostle Paul, who tells us, "that the things which are seen, were not made of things which do appear;"meT ek fainomTnoon t= blep=menon gegonTnai; which is sufficient to settle

that point. By the same important passage it is also determined, that "the worlds were produced in their form, as well as substance, instantly out of nothing; or it would not be true, that they were not made of things which do appear." "The apostle states that these things were not made out of a pre-existent matter; for, if they were, that matter, however extended or modified, must appear in that thing into which it is compounded and modified; therefore it could not be said, that the things which are seen, are

not made of things that appear: and he shows us also, by these words, that the present mundane fabric was not formed or re-formed from one anterior, as some suppose." (Dr. A CLARKE in loc.) No interval of time is allowed in the account of the creation by Moses, between the creating and the framing of the worlds, (that is, the heavens and the earth simply,) so created and framed at once by the word of God. The natural sense too of the phrase

"in the beginning," is also thus preserved. Thrown back, so to speak, into eternity without reference to time it has no meaning, or at best a very obscure one; but connected with time, the commencement of our mundane chronology, it has a definite and obvious sense. Moses begins his reckoning from the first creative act;- from the creation of the "heavens and the earth,"

which was therefore a part of the work of the first natural day. "In the first of these natural days, the

whole mineral fabric of this globe was formed at once, of such size and figure, with such properties, in such proportions to space, and with such arrangement of its materials, as most conduced to the ends for which God created it." (4)

(4) This view is totally inconsistent with the favorite notion of certain modern geologists of a primitive chaotic ocean, containing like that of the heathen poets, the elements of all things; a notion which those who wish to reconcile the

account of Genesis with the modern geology have been willing to concede to them, on the ground that Moses has said that the earth was "without form and void." But they have not considered that it was "the earth," not a liquid mass, which is thus characterized; circumfused with water, it is true, but not mingled with it. The LXX render the phrase, tohu vabohu, aoratos kai akatastatos adad, invisible and unfurnished, - invisible both because of the darkness, and the water which covered it, and

unfurnished, because destitute as yet of vegetables and animals. "It is wonderful," says Rosenmuller, "how so many interpreters could imagine that a chaos was described in the words tohu vabohu. This notion unquestionably took its origin from the fictions of the Greek and Latin poets, which were transferred, by those interpreters, to Moses." Those fictions ground themselves, we may add, upon traditions received from the earliest times; but the additions of poetic fancy are not to be

applied to interpret the Scriptures.

It will now be observed, that if such interpretations of the Mosaic account cannot be allowed, the decisions of Scripture and some of the modern speculations in geology, must be left directly to oppose each other, and that their hostility on this point cannot be softened by the advocates of accommodation. On this account no alarm need be felt by the believer, "for there is no counsel against the Lord;" and the progress

of true philosophy will ever, in the result, add evidence to the truth of revelation. On the antiquity of the human race geology has been compelled already to give its testimony to the accuracy of Moses, and the time is probably not far distant when a similar testimony will be educed from it, as to the antiquity of the globe.

In what it now opposes that authority, it may serve to rebuke the dogmatism with which it has disputed the Scriptures, to observe, that, strictly speaking, the

science itself is not yet half a century old, and is conversant, not with the surface of the earth only, but with its interior strata, which have been as yet but partially examined. It is therefore too early to theorize with so much confidence; and the eager manner in which its hasty speculations have been taken up against the Mosaic account, can only remind thinking men of the equally eager manner in which the chronologies of China and Hindustan, and the supposed zodiacs of Egyptian temples were

once caught at, for the same reason, and we may justly fear from the same motives. It will, indeed, be time enough to enter into a formal defense of Moses, when geologists agree among themselves on leading principles. Cuvier gives rather an amusing account of the odd and contradictory speculations of his scientific brethren; (Theory, by JAMIESON, page 41-47;) all of which he of course condemns, and fancies himself, as they all fancied themselves before him, a successful theorist. The vehemence with which

the two great rival geological sects, the Neptunian and Plutonian, have disputed, to a degree almost unprecedented in the modern age of philosophy, adds but little authority to the decisions of either, inasmuch as the contest is grounded upon an assumed knowledge of facts, and there-fore shows that the facts themselves are but indistinctly apprehended in their relations to each other, and that the collection of phenomena on both sides still need to be arranged and systematized, under

the guidance of some calm, and modest, and master mind. (5)

(5) Mons. L. A. NECKER DE SAUSSURE, (Voyage en Ecosse,) speaking of the disputes between the Wernerians and Huttonians, says, "The former availed themselves of the ascendancy which a more minute study of minerals afforded, to depreciate the observations of their adversaries. They denied the existence of facts which the latter had discovered, or they tried to sink their importance.

Hence it happened that phenomena, important to the natural history of the earth, have never been made known and appreciated as they ought to have been, by geologists most capable of estimating their consequences."

In all these speculations it is observable, that it is assumed at once that philosophy and the Mosaic account are incompatible, and generally without any pains having been taken to understand that account itself. Yet as that account professes to be from one

who was both the author and the witness of the phenomena in question, it might have been supposed that the aid of testimony would have been gladly brought to induction. An able work has been recently published on this subject by Mr. Granville Penn, who has at once reproved the bold philosophy which excludes the operation of God, and employs itself only among second causes; and has unfolded the Mosaic account of two great revolutions of the earth, one of which took place when

"the waters were gathered into one place," and the other at the deluge, "when the fountains of the great deep were broken up," (6) and has applied them to account for those phenomena which have been made to require a theory not to be reconciled with the sacred historian. (7) (6) See note A at the end of the chapter.

(7) A scientific journal of great reputation, edited at the Royal Institution, has made an honorable disclaimer of those theories which contradict the

Scriptures, and speaks in commendation of the work of Mr. Penn: "We are not inclined, even if we had time, to enter into the comparative merits of the fire and water fancies, miscalled theories; but we have certain old-fashioned prejudices, which, in these enlightened days of skepticism and infidelity, will no doubt be set down as mightily ridiculous, but which, nevertheless, induce us to pause before we acquiesce either in the one or the other. There is another mode of accounting for the present

state of the earth's structure, on principles at least as rational, in a philosophical light, as either the Plutonian or Neptunian; and inasmuch as it is more consistent with, and founded on, sacred history, incomparably superior. (See Mr. GRANVILLE PENN'S Comparative Estimate of the Mineral and Mosaical Geologies")

Voltaire objected to the philosophy of the Mosaic account, that it has represented a solid firmament to have been

formed, in which the stars are fixed as in a wall of adamant. This objection was made in ignorance of the import of the original word rendered firmamentum by the Vulgate, and which signifies an expanse, referring evidently to the atmosphere. The Septuagint seems to have rendered raqiya by sterewma, which signifies a firm support, with reference to the office of the atmosphere, to keep up, as effectually as by some solid support, the waters contained in the

clouds. The account of Moses is philosophically true; the expanded or diffused atmosphere "divides the waters from the waters," the waters in the clouds from the waters of the earth and sea; and the objection only shows ignorance of the original language, or inattention to it.

It is more difficult to explain that part of the Mosaic relation which represents light as created on the first day, and the sun not until the fourth; it would be wearisome to give

the various solutions which have been offered. One of the most recent, that which supposes the creation of latent heat and light to be spoken of, cannot certainly be maintained; for the light which on the first day obeyed the sublime fiat, was not latent, but in a state of excitement, and collected itself into a body sufficient to produce the distinction between day and night, which, had it been either in a latent state, or every where diffused in an excited form, could not have been effected. The difficulty,

however, so, far from discrediting the Mosaic account, affords it a striking confirmation. Had it been compiled under popular notions, it never could have entered the mind of man, drawing all his philosophy from the optical appearances of nature only, that light, sufficient to form the distinction between day and night, should have been created independent of the sun; and the conclusion therefore is, that the account was received either from inspiration, or from a

tradition pure from its original fountain, and which had flowed on to the time of Moses, unmixed with popular corruptions.

"Sir William Herschel," says Mr. Granville Penn, "has discovered that the body of the sun is an opaque substance; and that the splendid matter which dispenses to the world light and heat, is a luminous atmosphere, (Phil. Trans. for 1795, p. 46; and for 1801, p. 265,) attached to its surface, figuratively, though not physically, as flame is attached to the

wick of a lamp or a torch. So that the creation of the sun, as a part of 'the host of heaven,' does not necessarily imply the creation of light; and, conversely, the creation of light does not necessarily imply the creation of the body of the sun. In the first creation of 'the heaven and the earth? therefore, not the planetary orbs only, but the solar orb itself, was created in darkness; awaiting the light, which, by one simple Divine operation, was to be communicated at once to all. When then the

almighty Word, in commanding light, commanded the first illumination of the solar atmosphere, its new light was immediately caught, and reflected throughout space, by all the members of the planetary system. And well may we imagine, that, in that first, sudden, and magnificent illumination of the universe, 'the morning stars sang together, and the sons of God shouted for joy?" Job 38:7.

But if the discovery of Herschel be real, the

passage just quoted supposes the solar orb to have been invested with its luminous atmosphere on the first day, and the difficulty in question still remains untouched, though it admirably explains how "the heavens," that is, our solar system, should be created by one act, and yet that it should require a second fiat to invest them with light.

Another way of meeting the difficulty is, that the lights which are said to have been made on the fourth day, were not on that day

actually created, but determined to certain uses. Thus Rosenmuller: "If any one who is conversant with the genius of the Hebrew, and free from any previous bias of his judgment, will read the words of this article in their natural connection, he will immediately perceive that they import the direction or determination of the heavenly bodies to certain uses which they were to supply to the earth. The words hayah maor, are not to be separated from the rest, or to be rendered fiant luminaria, - let there be

lights; that is, let lights be made; but rather, let lights be, that is, serve in the expanse of heaven- inserviant in expanso caelorum-for distinguishing between day and night; and let them be, or serve, for signs, &c. For we are to observe, that the verb hayah, to be, in construction with the prefix lmo for, is generally employed to express the direction or determination of a thing to an end; and not the production of the thing: e. g. Num. 10:31; Zech. 8:19, and in many other places."

To this there is an obvious objection, that it does not assign any work, properly speaking, to the fourth day; and how, when neither being was on that day given to them, nor any change effected in their qualities or relations, the lights could be determined to certain uses except by giving information of their uses to men, cannot be conceived; and as yet man was not created. Mr. Penn indeed supposes that the heavenly bodies had been hid from the earth till the fourth day by vapors; that then they were for the first time

dispelled; and, as he eloquently says, "the amazing calendar of the heavens, ordained to serve for the notation of time in all human concerns, civil and religious, so long as time and man should continue, was therefore to be now first unfolded to the earth, with all the visible indices of time by which its measures were thereafter to be marked, distinguished, and computed; and the splendid cause, which had hitherto issued its effect of light through an interposed medium, was to dispense

that light to the earth immediately, in the full manifestation of its effulgence."

The notion, that the earth was from the first to the fourth day enveloped with vapor, so that, as in a fog, the distinction of day and night was manifest, though the celestial orbs were not visible, is however assumed, and does not appear quite philosophical and though the dispersion of these vapors from the atmosphere assigns a work to the fourth day, it scarcely appears to be of

sufficient importance to accord with the language of the history. It would be better to suppose with others, that on the fourth day the annual motion of the earth commenced, which till then merely turned upon its axis, and with it the annual motion of the moon and planets in their orbits,

- that wonderfully rapid and yet regular flight of the heavenly bodies which so awfully displays the power of the great Artificer in communicating, and constantly feeding, the

mighty impulse, and which is so essential to the measurement of time, that without it the "lights" could not be, or serve, "for signs and for seasons," and " for "solemn "days," religious festivals, and the commemoration of important events, and "for years." A sublime work is thus assigned to the fourth day, and the difficulty seems mainly to be removed: but whether some violence is not done to the letter of the account, may still be doubted; and the difficulty which proves, as we have seen, if

admitted in its full force, more for the Mosaic relation than against it, had better be retained than one iota of the strict grammatical and contextual meaning of Scripture be suffered to pass away.

Several objections have been made at different times to the Mosaic account of the deluge. The fact however is not only preserved in the traditions of all nations, as we have already seen; but after all the philosophical arguments which were

formerly urged against it, philosophy has at length acknowledged that the present surface of the earth must have been submerged under water. "Not only," says Kirwan, "in every region of Europe, but also of both the old and new continents, immense quantities of marine shells, either dispersed or collected, have been discovered." This and several other facts seem to prove, that at least a great part of the present earth was, before the last general convulsion to which it has been subjected, the bed of

an ocean which, at that time, was withdrawn from it. Other facts seem also to prove with sufficient evidence, that this was not a gradual retirement of the waters which once covered the parts now inhabited by men; but a violent one, such as may be supposed from the brief, but emphatic relation of Moses. The violent action of water has left its traces in various undisputed phenomena. "Stratified mountains of various heights exist in different parts of Europe, and of both continents, in and

between whose strata various substances of marine, and some vegetables of terrestrial origin repose either in their natural state, or petrified." (KIRWAN'S Geological Essays.) "To overspread the plains of the arctic circle with the shells of Indian seas, and with the bodies of elephants and rhinoceros, surrounded by masses of submarine vegetation; to accumulate on a single spot, as at La Bolca, in promiscuous confusion, the marine productions of the four quarters of the globe; what conceivable

instrument would be efficacious but the rush of mighty waters?" (GISBORNE'S "Testimony of Natural Theology" &c.) These facts, about which, there is no dispute, and which are acknowledged by the advocates of each of the prevailing geological theories, give a sufficient attestation to the deluge of Noah, in which "the fountains of the great deep were broken up," and from which precisely such phenomena might be expected to follow. To this may be added, though less decisive in proof, yet

certainly strong as presumptive evidence, that the very aspect of the earth's surface exhibits interesting marks both of the violent action, and the rapid subsidence of waters; as well as affords a most interesting instance of the Divine goodness in converting what was ruin itself, into utility, and beauty. The great frame work of the varied surface of the habitable earth was probably laid by a more powerful agency than that of water; either when on the third day the waters under the heavens were

gathered into one place, and the crust of the primitive earth was broken down to receive them, so that "the dry land might appear;" or by those mighty convulsions which appear to have accompanied the general deluge; but the rounding, so to speak, of what was rugged, where the substance was yielding, and the graceful undulations of hill and dale which so frequently present themselves, were probably effected by the retiring waters. The flood has passed away; but the soils

which it deposited remain; and the valleys through which its last streams were drawn off to the ocean, with many an eddy and sinuous course, still exist, exhibiting visible proofs of its agency, and impressed with forms so adapted to the benefit of man, and often so gratifying to the finest taste, that when the flood "turned," it may be said to have "left a blessing behind it."

Thus the objections once made to the fact of a general deluge have been greatly weakened by the

progress of philosophical knowledge; and may indeed be regarded as nearly given up, like the former notion of the high antiquity of the race of men, founded on the Chinese and Egyptian chronologies and pretended histories. Philosophy has even at last found out that there is sufficient water in the ocean, if called forth, to overflow the highest mountains to the height given by Moses, a conclusion which it once stoutly denied. Keill formerly computed that

twenty-eight oceans would be necessary for that purpose, but we are now informed "that a farther progress in mathematical and physical knowledge has shown the different seas and oceans to contain at least forty-eight times more water than they were then supposed to do; and that the mere raising of the temperature of the whole body of the ocean to a degree no greater than marine animals live in, in the shallow seas between the tropics, would so expand it as more than to produce the height above

the mountains stated in the Mosaic account." As to the deluge of Noah, therefore, infidelity has almost entirely lost the aid of philosophy in framing objections to the Scriptures.

The dimensions of the ark, and the preservation of the animals contained in it, are however still the subject of occasional ridicule, though with little foundation. Dr. Hales proves the ark to have been of the burthen of 42,413 tons, and asks, "Can we doubt of its being sufficient to contain eight

persons, and about two hundred, or two hundred and fifty pair of four-footed animals, (a number to which, according to M. Buffon, all the various distinct species may be reduced,) together with all the subsistence necessary for a twelvemonth, with the fowls of the air, and such reptiles and insects as cannot live under water? All these various animals were controlled by the power of God, whose special agency is supposed in the whole transaction, and 'the lion was made to lie down with the kid.'"

Whether Noah was commanded to bring with him, into the ark, a pair of all living creatures, zoologically and numerically considered, has been doubted; and as during the long period between the creation and the flood, animals must have spread themselves over a great part of the antediluvian earth, and certain animals would, as now, probably become indigenous to certain climates, the pairs saved must in such cases have traveled from immense distances. Of such marches

no intimation is given in the history; and this seems to render it probable that the animals which Noah was "to bring with him" into the ark, were the animals, clean and unclean, of the country in which he dwelt, and which, from the evident capacity of the ark, must have been in great variety and number. The terms used, it is true, are universal; and it is satisfactory to know that if the largest sense of them be taken, there was ample accommodation in the ark.

Nevertheless, universal terms in Scripture are not always to be taken mathematically; and in the vision of Peter, the phrase pßnta tß tetrßpoda kaf herpetß teTs geTs - "all the four-footed beasts of, the earth" must be understood of "varii generis quadrupedes" as Schleusner paraphrases it. In this case we may easily account for the exuviae of animals, whose species no longer exist, and which have been discovered in various places. The number of such extinct species has probably been greatly

overrated by Cuvier; but of the fact to a considerable extent, there can be no doubt.

It is also to be remarked, that we are not obliged to go to the limited interpretation of the command to Noah respecting the animals to be preserved in the ark, in order, to account for this fact; for without adopting the totally unscriptural theory of a former world; or of more general revolutions of the earth than the Scriptures state, (partial ones affecting large

districts may have taken place,) we know of no principle in the word of God which should lead us to conclude, that all the animals which God at first created should be preserved to the end of time. In many countries whole species of wild animals have perished by the progress of cultivation, a process which must ultimately produce the utter extinction of the same species everywhere. The offices which many other creatures were designed to fulfill in the economy of nature, may have

terminated with the new circumstances in which the parts they have chiefly inhabited are placed.

So it might be before the flood, and in many places since. Thus then the exuviae of extinct species may be expected to present themselves. But in addition to this, if we suppose that during the antediluvian period, animals of various kinds had located themselves in different portions of the ocean, and in different climates of the primitive earth; and that, of the terrestrial animals

become indigenous to parts of the earth distant from Noah and the inhabited world, some species were not received into the ark, their remains will also occasionally be discovered, and present the proof of modes of animated existence not now to be paralleled. Among fossil remains it has been made a matter of surprise that no human skeletons, or but few, and those in recent formations, have been found. The reason however is not difficult to furnish. If we admit that the present continents were the bottom

of the antediluvian ocean, and that the ocean has changed its place; then the former habitations of men are submerged, and their remains are beyond human reach. If any part of the antediluvian earth still remains, it is probably that region to which Noah and his family were restored from the ark; and in those countries, geology has not commenced its interior researches, and such fossil remains may there exist. There is this difference between the human race and the inferior animals, that while the latter for

near two thousand years were roaming over the wide earth, the former confined themselves to one region; for those extravagant calculations as to the population of the earth at the time of the flood, which some have made, cannot be maintained on the authority of Scripture, on which they professedly rest; since it is certain that they represent Noah as a preacher of righteousness to the whole existing "world" of men, during the time the ark was preparing, one hundred and twenty

years. The human race must therefore have lived, however populous, in the same region, and been either in personal communication with him, or within reach of the distinct report of his doctrines, and of that great and public act of his faith, the preparing of the ark, "by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." Even Cuvier gives it as a reason why human skeletons are not found in a fossil state, "that the place which, men then inhabited

may have sunk into the abyss, and that the bones of that destroyed race may yet remain buried under the bottom of some actual seas."

Such are the leading evidences of the truth of the Holy Scriptures, and of the religious system which they unfold, from the first promise made to the first fallen man, to its perfected exhibition in the New Testament. The Christian will review these solid and immovable foundations of his faith with unutterable joy. They leave none of his

moral interests unprovided for in time; they set before him a certain and a felicitous immortality. The skeptic and the infidel may be entreated, by every compassionate feeling, to a more serious consideration of the evidences of this Divine system, and the difficulties and hopelessness of their own; and they ought to be reminded, in the words of a modern writer, "If Christianity be true, it is tremendously true." Let them turn to an insulted, but yet a merciful Savior, who even now prays for his

blasphemers, in the words he once addressed to Heaven in behalf of his murderers, FATHER, FORGIVE THEM; FOR THEY KNOW NOT WHAT THEY DO!

Note A.

From the work referred to in the text, the following extracts will be read with interest.

Mr. Penn first controverts the notion of those geologists who think that the earth was originally a fluid mass; and as they plead the authority of Sir I.

Newton, who is said to have concluded from its figure, (an obtuse spheroid,) that it was originally a yielding mass, Mr. Penn shows that this was only put hypothetically by him; and that he has laid it down expressly as his belief, not that there was first a chaotic ocean, and then a gradual process of first formations, but that "God at the beginning formed all material things of such figures and properties as most conduced to the end for which he formed them;" and that he judged it to be

unphilosophical to ascribe them to any mediate or secondary cause, such as laws of nature operating in a chaos. Mr. Penn then proceeds to show, that, though what geologists call first formations may have the appearance of having been produced by a process, say of crystallization, or any other, that is no proof that they were not formed by the immediate act of God, as we are taught in the Scriptures; and he confirms this by examples from the first formations in the animal and vegetable

kingdoms, and contends that the first formations of the mineral kingdom must come under the same rule. "If a bone of the first created man now remained, and were mingled with other bones pertaining to a generated race; and if it were to be submitted to the inspection and examination of an anatomist, what opinion and judgment would its sensible phenomena suggest, respecting the mode of its first formation, and what would be his conclusion? If he were unapprised of its true

origin, his mind would see nothing in its sensible phenomena but the laws of ossification; just as the mineral geology "sees nothing in the details of the formation of minerals, but precipitations, crystallizations, and dissolutions.' (D'Aubuisson, i, pp. 326-7.) He would therefore naturally pronounce of this bone, as of all the other bones, that its ' fibers were originally soft,' until, in the shelter of the maternal womb, it acquired ' the hardness of a cartilage, and then of bone,' that this

effect ' was not produced at once; or in a very short time,' but ' by degrees;' that, after birth, it increased in hardness 'by the continual addition of ossifying matter, until it ceased to grow at all.'

"Physically true as this reasoning would appear, it would nevertheless be morally and really false. Why would it be false? Because it concluded, from mere sensible phenomena, to the certainty of a fact which could not be established by the evidence of sensible phenomena

alone; namely, the mode of the first formation of the substance of created bone."

Let us proceed from animal to vegetable matter; and let us consider the first created tree, under which the created man first reposed, and from which he gathered his first fruit. That tree must have had a stem, or trunk, through which the juices were conveyed from the root to the fruit, and by which it was able to sustain the branches upon which the fruit grew.

"If a portion of this created tree now remained, and if a section of its wood were to be mingled with other sections of propagated trees, and submitted to the inspection and examination of a naturalist; what opinion and judgment would its sensible phenomena suggest to him, respecting the mode of its first formation; and what would be his conclusion? If he were unapprised of its true origin, his mind would see nothing in its sensible phenomena, but the laws of lignification; just as the

mineral geologist ' sees nothing in the details of the formations of primitive rock, but precipitations, crystallizations, and dissolutions.' He would therefore naturally pronounce of it as of all the other sections of wood: that its 'fibers,' when they first issued from the seed., `were soft and herbaceous;' that they ' did not suddenly pass to the hardness of perfect wood,' but, ' after many years;' that the hardness of their folds, ' which indicate the growth of each year,' was therefore effected only ' by degrees;'

and that, ' since nature does nothing but by a progressive course, it is not surprising that its substance acquired its hardness only by little and little.'

"Physically true as the naturalist would here appear to reason; yet his reasoning, like that of the anatomist, would be morally and really false. And why would it be false? For the same reason; because he concluded from mere sensible phenomena, to the certainty of a fact which could not be

established by the evidence of sensible phenomena alone; namely, the mode of the first formation of the substance of created wood.

"There only now remains to be considered, the third, or mineral kingdom of this terrestrial system; and it appears probable, to reason and philosophy, by prima facie evidence, that the principle determining the mode of first formations, in two parts of this three-fold division of matter, must have equal authority in this third part. And indeed, after the

closest investigation of the subject, we can discover no ground whatever for supposing that this third part is exempted from the authority of that common principle; or that physics are a whit more competent to dogmatize concerning the mode of first formations, from the evidence of phenomena alone, in the mineral kingdom, than they have been found to be in the animal or vegetable; or to affirm, from the indications of the former, that the mode of its first formations was more gradual and

tardy than those of the other two.

"Let us try this point, by proceeding with our comparison; and let us consider the first created rock, as we have considered the first created bone and wood; and let us ask, what is rock, in its nature and composition?

"To this question, mineralogy replies: `By the word rock, we mean every mineral mass of such bulk as to be regarded an essential part of the structure of the globe. (D'Aubuisson, i, p. 272.)

We understand by the word mineral, a natural body, inorganic, solid, homogeneous, that is, composed of integrant molecules of the same substance. (D'Aubuisson, i, p. 271.) We may, perhaps, pronounce that a mass is essential, when its displacement would occasion the downfall of other masses which are placed upon it. (D'Aubuisson, i, p. 272.) Such are those lofty and ancient mountains, the first and most solid bones, as it were, of this globe, - les premiers, les plus

solides ossemens, - which have merited the name of primitive, because, scorning all support and all foreign mixture, they repose always upon bases similar to themselves, and comprise within their substance no matter but of the same nature. (Saussure, Voyages des Alps, Disc. Prel. pp. 6, 7.) These are the primordial mountains; which traverse our continents in various directions, rising above the clouds, separating the basins of rivers one from another; serving, by means of their eternal snows, as

reservoirs for feeding the springs, and forming in some measure the skeleton, or, as it were, the rough frame work of the earth. (Cuvier, sec. 7, p.

39.) These primitive masses are stamped with the character of a formation altogether crystalline, as if they were really the product of a tranquil precipitation.' (D'Aubuisson, ii, p. 5.)

"Had the mineral geology contented itself with this simple mineralogical statement, we should have thus argued concerning the

crystalline phenomena of the first mineral formations; conformably to the principles which we have recognized. As the bone of the first man, and the wood of the first tree, whose solidity was essential for `giving shape, firmness, and support,' to their respective systems, were not, and could not have been, formed by the gradual processes of ossification and lignification, of which they nevertheless must have exhibited the sensible phenomena, or apparent indications; so, reason

directs us to conclude, that primitive rock, whose solidity was equally essential for giving shape; firmness, and support to the mineral system of this globe, was not, and could not have been, formed by the gradual process of precipitation and crystallization, notwithstanding any sensible phenomena, apparently indicative of those processes, which it may exhibit; but that in the mineral kingdom, as in the animal and vegetable kingdoms, the creating agent anticipated in his

formations, by an immediate act, effects, whose sensible phenomena could not determine the mode of their formation; because the real mode was in direct contradiction to the apparent indications of the phenomena.

"But the mineral geology has not contented itself with that simple mineralogical statement; nor drawn the conclusion which we have drawn, in conformity with the principles, and in observance of the rules, of Newton's philosophy. It

affirms, 'that the characters by which geology is written in the book of nature, in which it is to be studied, are minerals;' (D'Aubuisson, Disc. Prel. p. 29;) and it 'sees nothing' in that book of nature but 'precipitations, crystallizations, and dissolutions; and therefore, because it sees nothing else, it concludes without hesitation, from crystalline phenomena to actual crystallization. Thus, by attempting the impossibility of deducing a universal principle, viz. the mode of first formations,

from the analysis of a single individual, viz. mineral matter, separate from co-ordinate animal and vegetable matter; and concluding from that defective analysis, to the general law of first formations; it set out with inadequate light, and it is no wonder that it ended in absolute darkness; for such is its elemental chaos, and its chemical precipitation of this globe: a doctrine so nearly resembling the exploded atomic philosophy of the Epicurean school, that it requires a very close and

laborious inspection to discover a single feature, by which they may be distinguished from each other."

This argument is largely supported and illustrated in the work; and thus by referring first formations of every kind to an immediate act of God, those immense periods of time which geology demands for its chemical processes, are rendered unnecessary. From first formations, Mr. Penn proceeds to oppose the notion that the earth has undergone many

general revolutions, and thinks that all geological phenomena may be better explained by the Mosaic record, which confines those general revolutions to two. Mr. Penn's course of observation will be seen by the following recapitulation of the second and third parts of his work:-

"That this globe, so constructed at its origin, has undergone two, and only two general changes or revolutions of its substance; each of which was caused by the

immediate will, intelligence, and power of GOD, exercised upon the work which he had formed, and directing the laws or agencies which he had ordained within it.

"That, by the FIRST change or revolution, [that of gathering the waters into one place, and making the dry land appear,] one portion or division of the surface of the globe was suddenly and violently fractured and depressed, in order to form, in the first instance, a receptacle or bed for the waters

universally diffused over that surface, and to expose the other portion, that it might become a dwelling for animal life; but yet, with an ulterior design, that the receptacle of the waters should eventually become the chief theatre of animal existence, by the portion first exposed experiencing a similar fracture and depression, and thus becoming in its turn, the receptacle of the same waters; which should then be transfused into it, leaving their former receptacle void and dry.

"That this FIRST revolution took place before the existence, that is, before the creation of any organized beings.

"That the sea, collected into this vast fractured cavity of the globe's surface, continued to occupy it during 1656 years [from the creation to the deluge;] during which long period of time, its waters acted in various modes, chemical and mechanical, upon the several soils and fragments which formed its bed; and marine organic matter, animal and vegetable, was

generated and accumulated in vast abundance.

"That, after the expiration of those 1656 years, it pleased God, in a SECOND revolution, to execute his ulterior design, by repeating the amazing operation by which he had exposed the first earth; and by the disruption and depression of that first earth below the level of the bed of the first sea, to produce a new bed, into which the waters descended from their former bed, leaving it to become the theatre of the

future generations of mankind.

"That This Present Earth Was That Former Bed.

"That it must, therefore, necessarily exhibit manifest and universal evidences of the vicissitudes which it has undergone; viz. of the vast apparent ruin occasioned by its first violent disruption and depression; of the presence and operation of the marine fluid during the long interval which succeeded; and, of the action and

effects of that fluid in its ultimate retreat.

"Within the limits of this general scheme, all speculations must be confined which would aspire to the quality of sound geology; yet vast and sublime is the field which it lays open, to exercise the intelligence and experience of sober and philosophical mineralogy and chemistry. Upon this legitimate ground, those many valuable writers, who have unwarily lent their science to uphold and propagate the vicious doctrine of a

chaotic geogony, may geologize with full security; and may there, concur to promote that true advancement of natural philosophy, which Newton holds to be inseparable from a proportionate advancement of the moral. They must thus at length succeed in perfecting a true philosophical geology, - which never can exist, unless the principle of Newton form the foundation, and the relation of Moses the working plan?"

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PART TWO: DOCTRINES OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

21 THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

The Divine authority of those writings which are received by Christians as a revelation of infallible truth, having been established, our next step is seriously, and with simplicity of mind, to examine their contents, and to collect from them that ample information on

religious and moral subjects which they profess to contain, and in which it had become necessary that the world should be supernaturally instructed. Agreeably to a principle which has already been laid down, I shall endeavor, as in the case of any other record, to exhibit their meaning by the application of those plain rules of interpretation which have been established for such purposes by the common agreement of the sober part of mankind. All the assistance within reach from critics,

commentators, and divines, shall however be resorted to; for, though the water can only be drawn pure from the sacred fountain itself, we yet owe it to many of these guides, that they have successfully directed us to the openings through which it breaks, and led the way into the depth of the stream.

The doctrine which the first sentence in this Divine revelation unfolds is, that there is a GOD, the CREATOR of heaven and earth; and as this is fundamental to the whole

scheme of duty, promise, and hope, which the books of Scripture successively unfold and explain, it demands our earliest consideration.

In three distinct ways do the sacred writers furnish us with information on this great and essential subject, the existence and the character of God;- from the names by which he is designated; from the actions ascribed to him; and from the attributes with which he is invested? in their invocations and praises; and in those lofty

descriptions of his nature which, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, they have recorded for the instruction of the world. These attributes will be afterward particularly considered; but the impression of the general view of the Divine character, as thus revealed, is too important to be omitted.

The names of God as recorded in Scripture, convey at once ideas of overwhelming greatness and glory, mingled with that awful mysteriousness

with which, to all finite minds, and especially to the minds of mortals, the Divine essence and mode of existence must ever be invested. Though ONE, he is ELOHIM, GODS, persons adorable. He is JEHOVAH, self-existing, EL, strong, powerful; EHIEH, I am, I will be, self-existence, independency, all-sufficiency, immutability, eternity; SHADDAI, almighty, all sufficient; ADON, Supporter, Lord, Judge. These are among the adorable appellatives of God which are scattered

throughout the revelation which he has been pleased to make of himself: but on one occasion he was pleased more particularly to declare "his name," that is, such of the qualities and attributes of the Divine nature, as mortals are the most interested in knowing; and to unfold, not only his natural, but those also of his moral attributes by which his conduct toward his creatures is regulated. "And the Lord passed by and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering,

and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and fourth generation," Exod. 34. This is the most ample and particular description of the character of God, as given by himself in the sacred records; and the import of the several titles by which he has thus in his infinite condescension manifested

himself, has been thus exhibited. He is not only JEHOVAH, self-existent, and El, the strong or mighty God; but "ROCHUM, the merciful being, who is full of tenderness and compassion, CHANUN, the gracious one, he whose nature is goodness itself- the loving God. EREC APAYIM, long suffering, the being who, because of his tenderness, is not easily irritated, but suffers long and is kind. RAB, the great or mighty one. CHESED, the bountiful Being; he who is exuberant in his

beneficence. EMETH, the truth, or true one, he alone who can neither deceive nor be deceived.

NOTSER CHESED, the preserver of bountifulness, he whose beneficence never ends, keeping mercy for thousands of generations, showing compassion and mercy while the world endures.

NOSE avon vapesha vechataah, he who bears away iniquity, transgression and sin; properly the REDEEMER, the PARDONER, the FORGIVER, the Being

whose prerogative it is to forgive sin, and save the soul. NAKEH lo yinnakeh, the righteous Judge, who distributes justice with an impartial hand. And PAKED, avon, &c, he who visits iniquity, he who punishes transgressors, and from whose justice no sinner can escape: the God of retributive and vindictive justice." (Dr. A. Olarke in loc.)

The second means by which the Scriptures convey to us the knowledge of God, is by the actions which they ascribe to him.

They contain indeed the important record of his dealings with men in every age which is comprehended within the limit of the sacred history; and, by prophetic declaration, they also exhibit the principles on which he will govern the world to the end of time; so that the whole course of the Divine administration may be considered as exhibiting a singularly illustrative comment upon those attributes of his nature, which, in their abstract form, are contained in such declarations as those which

have been just quoted. The first act ascribed to God is that of creating the heavens and the earth out of nothing; and by his fiat alone arranging their parts, and peopling them with living creatures. By this were manifested-his eternity and self- existence, as he who creates must be before all creatures, and he who gives being to others can himself derive it from none; his almighty power, shown both in the act of creation, and in the number and vastness of the objects so produced: his wisdom, in their

arrangement, and in their fitness to their respective ends: and his goodness as the whole tended to the happiness of sentient beings. The foundations of his natural and moral government are also made manifest by his creative acts. In what he made out of nothing he had an absolute right and prerogative of ordering and disposal; so that to alter or destroy his own work, and to prescribe the laws by which the intelligent and rational part of his creatures should be governed, are rights which

none can question. Thus on the one hand his character of Lord or Governor is established, and on the other our duty of lowly homage and absolute obedience.

Agreeably to this, as soon as man was created, he was placed under a rule of conduct. Obedience was to be followed with the continuance of the Divine favor; transgression, with death. The event called forth new manifestations of the character of God. His tender MERCY, in the compassion showed to the

fallen pair; his JUSTICE, in forgiving them only in the view of a satisfaction to be hereafter offered to his justice by an innocent representative of the sinning race; his I.OVE to that race, in giving his own Son to become this Redeemer, and in the fullness of time to die for the sins of the whole world; and his HOLINESS, in connecting with this provision for the pardon of man the means of restoring him to a sinless state, and to the obliterated image of God in which he had been

created. Exemplifications of the Divine MERCY

are traced from age to age, in his establishing his own worship among men, and remitting the punishment of individual and national offences in answer to prayer offered from penitent hearts, and in dependence upon the typified or actually offered universal sacrifice:- of his CONDESCENSION, in stooping to the cases of individuals; in his dispensations both of providence and grace, by showing respect to the poor

and humble; and, principally, by the incarnation of God in the form of a servant, admitting men into familiar and friendly intercourse with himself, and then entering into heaven to be their patron and advocate, until they should be received unto the same glory, "and so be for-ever with the Lord:" - of his strictly RIGHTEOUS

GOVERNMENT, in the destruction of the old world, the cities of the plain, the nations of Canaan, and all ancient

states, upon their "filling up the measure of their iniquities;" and, to show that "he will by no means clear the guilty;" in the numerous and severe punishments inflicted even upon the chosen seed of Abraham, because of their transgressions:- of his LONG

SUFFERING, in frequent warnings, delays, and corrective judgments, inflicted upon individuals and nations, before sentence of utter excision and destruction:- of FAITHFULNESS and

TRUTH, in the fulfillment of promises, often many ages after they were given, as in the promises to Abraham respecting the possession of the land of Canaan by his seed; and in all the

"promises made to the fathers" respecting the advent, vicarious death, and illustrious offices of the Christ, the Savior of the world:- of his IMMUTABILITY, in the constant and unchanging laws and principles of his government, which remain to this day precisely the

same, in everything universal, as when first promulgated, and have been the rule of his conduct in all places as well as through all time:- of his PRESCIENCE of future events, manifested by the predictions of Scripture; and of the depth and stability of his COUNSEL, as illustrated in that plan and purpose of bringing back a revolted world to obedience and felicity, which we find steadily kept in view in the Scriptural history of the acts of God in former ages; which is still the end toward which all

his dispensations bend, however wide and mysterious their sweep; and which they will finally accomplish, as we learn from the prophetic history of the future, contained in the Old and New Testaments.

Thus the course of Divine operation in the world has from age to age been a manifestation of the Divine character, continually receiving new and stronger illustrations to the completion of the Christian revelation by the ministry of Christ and his inspired

followers, and still placing itself in brighter light and more impressive aspects as the scheme of human redemption runs on to its consummation. From all the acts of God as recorded in the Scriptures, we are taught that he alone is God; that he is present everywhere to sustain and govern all things; that his wisdom is infinite, his counsel settled, and his power irresistible; that he is holy, just, and good; the Lord and the Judge, but the Father and the Friend of man.

More at large do we learn what God is, from the declarations of the inspired writings.

As to his SUBSTANCE, that "God is a Spirit." As to his DURATION, that "from everlasting to everlasting he is God;" "the King, eternal, immortal, invisible." That, after all the manifestations he has made of himself, he is from the infinite perfection and glory of his nature, INCOMPREHENSIBLE; "Lo, these are but parts of his ways, and how little a portion is heard of him!"

"Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out." That he is UNCHANGEABLE, "the Father of Lights with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." That "he is the fountain of LIFE," and the only independent Being in the universe, "who only hath immortality."

That every other being, however exalted, has its existence from him; "for by him were all things created, which are in heaven and in earth, whether they are

visible or invisible." That the existence of everything is upheld by him, no creature being for a moment independent of his support; "by him all things consist" "upholding all things by the word of his power." That he is OMNIPRESENT: "Do not I fill heaven and earth with my presence, saith the Lord?" That he is OMNISCIENT: "All things are naked and open before the eyes of him with whom we have to do." That he is the absolute LORD and OWNER of all things: "The heavens, even the heaven

of heavens, are thine, and all the parts of them." "The earth is thine, and the fullness thereof', the world and them that dwell therein." "He doeth according to his will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth" That his PROVIDENCE extends to the minutest objects:

"The hairs of your head are all numbered" "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father." That

he is a being of unspotted PURITY

and perfect RECTITUDE: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts!" "A God of truth, and in whom is no iniquity." "Of purer eyes than to behold iniquity." That he is JUST in the administration of his government: "Shall not the Judge of the whole earth do right?" "Clouds and darkne ss are round about him; judgment and justice are the habitation of his throne." That his WISDOM is unsearchable: "O the depth of the wisdom and

knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" And, finally, that he is GOOD and MERCIFUL:

"Thou art good, and thy mercy endureth forever." "His tender mercy is over all his works."

"God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses

unto them." "God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son."

Under these deeply awful, but consolatory views, do the Scriptures present to us the supreme object of our worship and trust, dwelling upon each of the above particulars with inimitable sublimity and beauty of language, and with an inexhaustible variety of illustration; nor can we compare these views of the Divine nature with the conceptions of the most enlightened of pagans, without feeling how much

reason we have for everlasting gratitude, that a revelation so explicit, and so comprehensive, should have been made to us on a subject which only a revelation from God himself could have made known. It is thus that Christian philosophers, even when they do not use the language of the Scriptures, are able to speak on this great and mysterious doctrine in language so clear, and with conceptions so noble; in a manner too so equable, so different to the sages of antiquity, who, if at any

time they approach the truth, when speaking of the Divine nature, never fail to mingle with" it some essentially erroneous or groveling conception. "By the word GOD," says Dr. Barrow, "we mean a Being of infinite wisdom, goodness, and power, the creator and the governor of all things, to whom the great attributes of eternity and independency, omniscience and immensity, perfect holiness! and purity, perfect justice and veracity, complete happiness, glorious majesty, and

supreme right of dominion, belong; and to whom the highest veneration, and most profound submission and obedience, are due." (Barrow on the Creed.) "Our notion of Deity," says Bishop Pearson, "doth expressly signify a Being or Nature of infinite perfection; and the infinite perfection of a Being or Nature consists in this, that it be absolutely and essentially necessary; an actual Being of itself; and potential or causative of all beings beside itself, independent from any other, upon which all

things else depend, and by which all things else are governed." (Pearson on the Creed.)

"God is a Being, and not any kind of being; but a substance, which is the foundation of other beings. And not only a substance, but perfect. Yet many beings are perfect in their kind, yet limited and finite. But God is absolutely, fully, and every way infinitely perfect; and therefore above spirits, above angels who are perfect comparatively. God's infinite perfection includes

all the attributes, even the most excellent. It excludes all dependency, borrowed existence, composition, corruption, mortality, contingency, ignorance, unrighteousness, weakness, misery, and all imperfections whatever. It includes necessity of being, independency, perfect unity, simplicity, immensity, eternity, immortality; the most perfect life, knowledge, wisdom, integrity, power, glory, bliss, and all these in the highest degree. We cannot pierce into the secrets of this eternal

Being. Our reason comprehends but little of him, and when it can proceed no farther, faith comes in, and we believe far more than we can understand: and this our belief is not contrary to reason; but reason itself dictates unto us that we must believe far more of God than it can inform us of." (Lawson's Theo-Politica.) To these we may add an admirable passage from Sir Isaac Newton: "The word GOD frequently signifies Lord; but every lord is not God; it is the dominion of a spiritual

Being or Lord, that constitutes God; true dominion, true God; supreme, the supreme; feigned, the false God. From such true dominion it follows that the true God is living, intelligent, and powerful; and from his other perfections that he is supreme, or supremely perfect; he is eternal and infinite; omnipotent and omniscient; that is, he endures from eternity to eternity; and is present from infinity to infinity. He governs all things that exist, and knows all things that are to be known: he is

not eternity or infinity, but eternal and infinite; he is not duration or space, but he endures and is present; he endures always, and is present everywhere; he is omnipresent, not only virtually, but also substantially; for power without substance cannot subsist. All things are contained and move in him; but without any mutual passion; he suffers nothing from the motions of bodies; nor do they undergo any resistance from his omnipresence.

It is confessed that God exists necessarily, and by the same necessity he exists always and everywhere. Hence also he must be perfectly scimitar, all eye, all ear, all arm, all the power of perceiving, understanding, and acting; but after a manner not at all corporeal, after a manner not like that of men, after a manner wholly to us unknown. He is destitute of all body, and all bodily shape; and therefore 'cannot be seen, heard, or touched; nor ought he to be worshipped under the representation of anything

corporeal. We have ideas of the attributes of God, but do not know the substance of even any thing: we see only the figures and colors of bodies, hear only sounds, touch only the outward surfaces smell only odors, and taste tastes; and do not, cannot, by any sense, or reflex act, know their inward substances: and much less can we have any notion of the substance of God. We know him by his properties and attributes."

It is observable that neither Moses, the first of the

inspired penmen, nor any of the authors of the succeeding canonical books, enters into any proof of this first principle of religion, that there is a GOD. They all assume it as a truth commonly known and admitted. There is indeed in the sacred volume no allusion to the existence of Atheistical sentiments, till some ages after Moses, and then it is not quite clear whether speculative or practical Atheism be spoken of. From this circumstance we learn that, previous to the time of Moses, the idea of

one supreme and infinitely perfect God was familiar to men; that it had descended to them from the earliest ages; and 'also that it was a truth of original revelation, and not one which the sages of preceding times had Wrought out by rational investigation and deduction. Had that been the fact, we might have expected some intimation of it: and that if those views of God which are found in the Pentateuch, were discovered by the successive investigations of wise men among the ancients, the progress of

this wonderful discovery would have been marked by Moses; or if one only had demonstrated this truth by his personal researches, that some grateful mention of so great a sage, of so celebrated a moral teacher, would have been made. A truth too so essential to the whole Mosaic system, and upon which his own official authority rested, had it originated from successful human investigation, would seem naturally to have required a statement of the arguments by which it had been demonstrated,

as a fit introduction to a book in which he professed to record revelations received from this newly discovered being, and to enforce laws uttered under his command. Nothing of this kind is attempted; and the sacred historian and lawgiver proceeds at once to narrate the acts of GOD, and to declare his will. The history which he wrote, however, affords the reason why the introduction of formal proof of the existence of one true God was thought unnecessary. The first man, we are informed, knew God, not

only from his works, but by sensible manifestation and converse; the same Divine appearances were made to Noah, to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob; and when Moses wrote, persons were still living who had conversed with those who conversed with God or were descended from the same families to whom God "at sundry times" had appeared in visible glory, or in angelic forms. These Divine manifestations were also matters of public notoriety among the primitive families of mankind; from them the

tradition was transmitted to then descendants; and the idea once communicated, was confirmed by every natural object which they saw around them. It continued even after the introduction of idolatry; and has never, except among the most ignorant of the heathen, been to this day obliterated by polytheistic superstitions. It was thus that the knowledge of God was communicated to the ancient world. No discovery of this truth, either in the time of Moses, or in any former age, was

made by human research; neither the date nor the process of it could therefore be stated in his writings; and it would have been trifling to moot a question which had been so fully determined, and to attempt to prove a doctrine universally received.

That the idea of a supreme First Cause was at first obtained by the exercise of reason, is thus contradicted by the facts, that the first man received the knowledge of God by sensible converse with him, and that this doctrine was

transmitted, with the confirmation of successive visible manifestations, to the early ancestors of all nations. Whether the discovery, therefore, of the simple truth of the existence of a First Cause be within the compass of human powers, is a point which cannot be determined by matter of fact; because it may be proved that those nations by whom that doctrine has been acknowledged, had their origin from a common stock, resident in that part of the world in which the primitive

revelations were given. They were therefore never in circumstances in which such an experiment upon the power or weakness of the human mind could be made. Among some uncivilized tribes, such as the Hottentots of Africa, and the aborigines of New South Wales, the idea of a Supreme Being is probably entirely obliterated; some notions of spiritual existences, superior in power to man, and possessed of creative and destructive powers, do however remain, naturally tending to that train of

reflection, which in better instructed minds issues in the apprehension of one Supreme and Divine Intelligence. But no instance has been known of the knowledge of God having thus, or by any other means, originating in themselves, been recovered; if restored to them at all, it has been by the instruction of others, and not by the rational investigation of even superior minds in their own tribes.

Wherever there has been sufficient mental

cultivation to call forth the exercise of the rational faculty in search of spiritual and moral truth, the idea of a First Cause has been previously known; wherever that idea has been totally obliterated the intellectual powers of man have not been in a state of exercise, and no curiosity as to such speculations has been awakened. Matter of fact does not therefore support the notion, that the existence o f God is discoverable by the unassisted faculties of man; and there is, I

conceive, very slender reason to admit the abstract probability.

A sufficient number of facts are obvious to the most cursory observation to show, that without some degree of education, man is wholly the creature of appetite. Labor, feasting, and sleep, divide his time, and wholly occupy his thoughts. If therefore we suppose a First Cause to be discoverable by human investigation, we must seek for the instances among a people whose civilization and intellectual culture

have routed the mind from its torpor, and given it an interest in abstract and philosophic truth; for to a people so circumstanced as never to have heard of God, the question of the existence of a First Cause must be one of mere philosophy. Religious motives, whether of hope or fear, have no influence where no religion exists, and its very first principle is here supposed to be as yet undiscovered. Before, therefore, we can conceive the human mind to have reached a state of activity sufficiently energetic and

curious even to commence such an inquiry, we must suppose a gradual progress from the uncivilized state, to a state of civil and scientific cultivation, and that without religion of any kind; without moral control; without principles of justice, except such as may have been slowly elaborated from those relations which concern the grosser interests of men, if even they be possible; without conscience; without hope ox fear in another life. That no society of civilized men has ever been constituted

under such circumstances, is what no one will deny; that it is possible to raise a body of men into that degree of civil improvement which would excite the passion for philosophic investigation without the aid of religion, which, in its lowest forms of superstition, admits in a defective degree what is implied in the existence of God, a superior, creative, governing, and destroying power, can have no proof, and is contradicted by every fact and analogy with which we are acquainted. Under the influence and

control of religion, all states, ancient and modern, have hitherto been formed and maintained. It has entered essentially into all their legislative and gubernative institutions; and Atheism is so obviously dissocializing, that even the philosophic Atheists of Greece and Rome confined it to their esoteric doctrine, and were equally zealous with others to maintain the public religion as a restraint upon the multitude, without which they clearly enough discerned that human laws, and merely human

motives, would be totally ineffectual to prevent that selfish gratification of the passions, the enmities, and the cupidity of men, which would break up every community into its original fragments, and arm every man against his fellow.

From this we may conclude, that man without religion cannot exist in that state of civility and cultivation in which his intellectual powers are disposed to, or capable of, such a course of inquiry as might lead him to a knowledge of God; and

that, as a mere barbarian, he would be wholly occupied with the gratification of his appetites, or his sloth. Should we however suppose it possible, that those who had no previous knowledge of God, or of superior invisible powers, might be brought to the habits of civil life, and be engaged in the pursuit of various knowledge, (which itself however is very incredible,) it would still remain a question, whether, provided no idea from tradition or instruction had been

suggested of the existence of spiritual superior beings, or of a supreme Creator or Ruler, such a truth would be within the reach of man, even, in an imperfect form. We have already seen, that a truth may appear exceedingly simple, important, and evident, when once known, and on this account its demonstration may be considered easy, which nevertheless has been the result of much previous research on the part of the discoverer.

(Vide part i, c. iv.) The abundant rational evidence of the existence of God, which may now be so easily collected, and which is so convincing, is therefore no proof, that without instruction from Heaven the human mind would ever have made the discovery. "God is the only way to himself; he cannot in the least be come at, defined or demonstrated by human reason; for where would the inquirer fix his beginning? He is to search for something he knows not what; a nature without known properties; a being

without a name. It is impossible for such a person to declare or imagine what it is he would discourse of, or inquire into; a nature he has not the least apprehension of; a subject he has not the least glimpse of, in whole or in part; which he must separate from all doubt, inconsistencies, and errors; he must demonstrate without one known or sure principle to ground it upon; and draw certain necessary conclusions whereon to rest his judgment, without the least knowledge of one term or

proposition to fix his procedure upon; and therefore can never know whether his conclusion be consequent, or not consequent, truth or falsehood, which is just the same in science as in architecture, to raise a building without a foundation." (Ellis's Knowledge of Divine Things.)

"Suppose a person, whose powers of argumentation are improved to the utmost pitch of human capacity, but who has received no idea of God by any

revelation, whether from tradition, Scripture, or inspiration, how is he to convince himself that God is, and from whence is he to learn what God is? That of which as yet he knows nothing, cannot be a subject of his thought, his reasonings, or his conversation. He can neither affirm nor deny till he know what is to be affirmed or denied. From whence then is our philosopher to divine, in the first instance, his idea of the infinite Being, concerning the reality of whose existence he is, in

the second place, to decide?" (Hare's Preservative against Socinianism.)

"Would a single individual, or even a single pair of the human race, or indeed several pairs of such beings as we are, if dropt from the hands of their Maker in the most genial soil and climate of this globe, without a single idea or notion engraved on their minds, ever think of instituting such an inquiry; or short and simple as the process of investigation is, would they be able to

conduct it, should it somehow occur to them. No man who has paid due attention to the means by which all our ideas of external objects are introduced into our minds through the medium of the senses; or to the still more refined process by which reflecting on what passes in our minds themselves, when we combine or analyze these ideas, we acquire the rudiments of all our knowledge of intellectual objects, will pretend that they would. The efforts of intellect necessity to discover an

unknown truth, are so much greater than those which may be sufficient to comprehend that truth, and feel the force of the evidence on which it rests, when fairly staled, that for one man, whose intellectual powers are equal to the former, ten thousand are only equal to the latter." (Gleig's Stackhouse Intro.)

"Between matter and spirit, things visible and invisible, time and eternity, beings finite and beings infinite, objects of sense and objects of faith, the connection is

not perceptible to human observation. Though we push our researches therefore to the extreme point, whither the light of nature can carry us, they will in the end be abruptly terminated, and we must stop short at an immeasurable distance between the creature and the Creator." (Van Mildert's Discourses.) These observations have great weight, and though we allow, that the argument which proves that the effects with which we are surrounded must have been caused, and thus

leads us up through a chain of subordinate; cause to one First Cause, has in it a simplicity, an obviousness, and a force, which, when we are previously furnished with the idea of God, makes it at first sight difficult to conceive, that men, under any degree of cultivation, should be inadequate to it; yet, if the human mind ever commenced such an inquiry at all, it is highly probable that it would rest in the notion of an eternal succession of causes and effects, rather than acquire the ideas of creation, in the

proper sense, and of a supreme Creator. Scarcely any of the philosophers of the most inquisitive ages of Greece, or those of their followers at Rome, though with the advantage of traditions conveying the knowledge of God, seem to have been capable of conceiving of creation out of nothing, (Vide part i, c. iv,) and they consequently admitted the eternity of matter. This was equally the case with the Theistical, the Atheistical, and the polytheistical philosophers. (8) It was not among them a subject of dispute; but

taken for a point settled and not to be contradicted, that matter was eternal, and could not therefore be created. Against this notion, since the revelation of truth to man, philosophy has been able to adduce a very satisfactory argument; but, though it is not a very recondite one, it was never discovered by philosophy while unaided by the Scriptures. In like manner philosophy can now furnish cogent arguments against an infinite succession of causes and effects; but it does not appear probable that they

could have been apprehended by those to whom the very notion of a First Cause had not been intimated. If however it were conceded, that some glimmering of this-great truth might, by induction, have been discovered by contemplative minds thus circumstanced; by what means could they have demonstrated to themselves that that great collection of bodies which we call the world had but one Creator; that he is an incorporeal Spirit; that he is eternal, self-existent, immortal, and

independent? Certain it is, that the argument a posteriori does not of itself fully confirm all these conclusions; and the argument a priori, when directed to these mysterious points, is not, with all the advantages which we enjoy, so satisfactory, as to leave no rational ground of doubt as to its conclusiveness. No sober man, we apprehend, would be content with that as the only foundation of his faith and hope. If indeed the idea of God were innate, as some have contended, the question

would be set at rest. But then every human being would be in possession of it. Of this there is not only no proof at all, but the evidence of fact is against it; and the doctrine of innate ideas may with confidence be pronounced a mere theory, assumed to support favorite notions, but contradicted by all experience. We are all conscious that we gain the knowledge of God by instruction; and we observe, that in proportion to the want of instruction, men are ignorant, as of other things, so of God.

Peter, the wild boy, who in the beginning of the last century, was found in a wood in Germany, far from having any innate sense of God or religion, seemed to be incapable of instruction; and the aboriginal inhabitants of New Holland are found, to this day, in a state of knowledge but little superior, and certainly have no idea of the existence of one supreme Creator.

(8) "Few, if any, of the ancient pagan philosophers acknowledged God to be, in the most proper sense, the

Creator of the world. By calling him Demiourgos, 'the Maker of the world,' they did not mean, that he brought it out of non-existence into being; but only that he built it out of pre-existent materials, and disposed it into a regular form and order." See ample proofs and illustrations in c. 13, part i, of Leland'S Necessity of Revelation.

It is therefore to be concluded, that we owe the knowledge of the existence of God, and of his attributes, to revelation alone; but, being now

discovered, the rational evidence of both is copious and irresistible; (9) so much so, that Atheism has never been able to make much progress among mankind where this revelation has been preserved. It is resisted by demonstrations too numerous, obvious, and convincing; and is itself too easily proved to involve the most revolting absurdities.

(9) "Tell men there is a God, and their mind embraces it as a necessary truth; unfold his attributes, and they will see the

explanation of them in his works. When the foundation is laid sure and firm that there is a God, and his will the cause of all things, and nothing made but by his special appointment and command, then the order of beings will fill their minds with a due sense of the Divine Majesty, and they may be made a scale to raise juster conceptions of what is immortal and invisible." (ELLIS'S Knowledge of Divine Things.) No subject has employed the thoughts and pens of the most profound

thinkers more than the demonstration of the being and attributes of God; and the evidence from fact, reason, and the nature of things, which has been collected, is large and instructive. These researches have not however brought to light any new attribute of God not found in Scripture. This is a strong presumption that the only source of our notions on this subject is the manifestation which God has been pleased to make of himself, and a confirmation that human

reason, if left to itself, had never made the slightest discovery respecting the Divine nature. - But as to what is revealed, they are of great importance in the controversy with polytheism, and with that still more unnatural and monstrous perversion, the philosophy which denies a God.

Demonstrations both a priori and a posteriori, the former beginning with the cause, the latter with the effect, have been attempted, not only of the being, but also of all the

attributes ascribed to God in the Holy Scriptures. On each we shall offer some observations and illustrations, taking the argument a posteriori first, both because, as to the simple question of the being of a God, it is the only satisfactory and convincing proof; and especially, because it is that only to which the Scriptures themselves refer us. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handy work." "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the

world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead." "For by

the greatness and beauty of the creatures proportionably the Maker of them is seen."

Nature, as one justly observes, proceeds from causes to effects; but the most certain and successful investigations of man, proceed from effects to causes, and this is the character of what logicians have called the argument a posteriori.

In philosophy it has been laid down as an axiom, "that no event or change comes to pass merely of itself, but that every change stands related to and implies the existence and influence of something else, in consequence of which such change comes to pass, and which may be regarded as the principle, beginning, or source of the change referred to it. Accordingly the term cause is usually employed to denote the supposed principle of change; and the term effect is applied to the change considered in

relation to the principle of change whence it proceeded. This axiom or principle is usually thus expressed:- "For every effect there must be a cause." "Nothing exists or comes to pass without a cause." "Nihil turpius philosopho quam fieri sine causa quicquam dicere."

Rooted as this principle is in the common sense, and the common observation and experience of mankind, it is assailed in the metaphysical Atheism of Hume, who appears to have borrowed his

argument from the no less skeptical Hobbes, and the relation of cause and effect has in consequence been the subject of considerable controversy. Causes have been distributed by logicians into efficient, material, final, and formal. Efficient causes are the agents that produce certain effects; material causes are the subjects on which the agent performs his operation; or those contingent natures which lie within the reach of the agent to influence. Final causes are the motives or purposes, which move to

action, or the end for which anything is done. Formal causes denote the changes resulting from the operation of the agent; or that which determines a thing to be what it is, and distinguishes it from everything else.

It is with efficient causes as understood in the above distribution, that we are principally concerned. Mr. Hume and his followers have laid it down, that there is no instance in which we are able to perceive a necessary connection between two

successive events; or to comprehend in what manner the one proceeds from the other, as its cause. - From experience, they observe, indeed we learn, that there are many events, which are constantly conjoined, so that the one invariably follows the other; but it is possible, for anything we know to the contrary, that this connection, though a constant one, as far as our observation has reached, may not be a necessary connection; nay, it is possible, that there may be no necessary connections

among any of the phenomena we see, and if there be any such connections existing, we may rest assured that we shall never be able to discover them. This doctrine has however been admitted by many who not only deny the skeptical conclusions which Hobbes and Hume deduced from it, but who contend that it leads to a directly contrary conclusion. "The fallacy of this part of Mr. Hume's system,"

says Professor Stewart, "does not consist in his

premises, but in the conclusion which he draws from them. The word cause is used, both by philosophers and the vulgar, in two senses, which are widely different. When it is said, that every change in nature indicates the operation of a cause; the word cause expresses something which is supposed to be necessarily connected with the change, and without which it could not have happened. This may be called the metaphysical meaning of the word; and such causes may be called metaphysical

or efficient causes. In natural philosophy, however, when we speak of one thing being the cause of another, all that we mean is, that the two are constantly conjoined; so that when we see the one, we may expect the other.

- These conjunctions we learn from experience alone; and without an acquaintance with them, we could not accommodate our conduct to the established course of nature. The causes which are the objects of our investigation in natural

philosophy, may, for the sake of distinction, be called physical causes." (Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind.) By this distinction and concession all that is skeptical end Atheistic, in Hume's doctrine, is indeed completely refuted; for if metaphysical or efficient causes be allowed, and also that "power, force, energy, and causation, are to be regarded as attributes of mind, and can exist in mind only," (Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind,) it is of little consequence to the

argument as to the existence of a supreme First Cause, whether the constant succession of events among physical causes, has a necessary connection or not; or in other words, whether what is purely material can have the attribute of causation. - The writer we have just quoted, thinks that this doctrine is "more favorable to Theism, than even the common notions upon this subject;" - "if at the same time we admit the authority of that principle of the mind, which leads us to refer every change to an

efficient cause," - "as it keeps the Deity always in view, not only as the first, but as the constantly operating, efficient cause in nature, and as the great connecting principle among all the various phenomena which we observe," (Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind.) This author still farther thinks, that Mr. Hume has undesignedly furnished an antidote by this error to Spinozism itself. " Mr. Hume's doctrine, in the unqualified form in which he states it, may lead to other

consequences not less dangerous; but if he had not the good fortune to conduct metaphysicians to the truth, he may at least be allowed the merit of having shut up forever one of the most frequented and fatal paths which led them astray," - "the cardinal principle on which the whole system of Spinoza turns, being that all events, physical and moral, are necessarily linked together as causes and effects." (Dissertation prefixed to the Supplement of the Encyclo. Britt.)

When the doctrine is thus restricted to physical causes, its dangerous tendency is greatly weakened, if not altogether neutralized; yet, notwithstanding the authority with which it has been supported, it may be suspected that it is radically unsound, and that it leads to consequences very contradictory to the experience of mankind, or, at best, that it is rather a philosophical paradox or quibble, than a philosophic discovery. What are called above metaphysical or efficient causes are

admitted, with respect to mind, of which "power, force, energy and causation, are attributes."

"One kind of cause, namely, what a man, or any other living being, is to his own voluntary actions, or to those changes which he produces directly in himself, and indirectly in himself, by the occasional exertion of his own power," says Dr. Gregory, (Literary and Philosophical Essays,) " may be called for distinction's sake an agent. That there are such agents, and that many events are

to be referred to them, as either wholly or partly their causes or principles of change, is not only certain but even self- evident." We are all conscious of power to produce certain effects, and we are sure that there is between this cause and the effect produced, more than a mere relation of antecedence and sequence, for we are conscious not only of designing to produce the effect, but of the exertion of power, though we do not always know the medium by which the power acts upon the object, as when we move

the hand or the foot voluntarily, nor the mode in which the exerted energy connects itself with the result. Yet the result follows the will, and however often this is repeated, it is still the same. The relations between physical causes and effects must be different from this; but if according to the doctrine of Hume it were only a relation of succession, the following absurdities, as stated by Dr. Reid, (Reid's Essays,) would inevitably follow - "night would be the cause of day, and day the

cause of night; for no two things have more constantly followed each other since the beginning of the world. Anything, for what we know, may be the cause of anything, since nothing is essential to a cause but its being constantly followed by the effect: what is unintelligent may be the cause of what is intelligent; folly may be the cause of wisdom, and evil of good; and thus all reasoning from the effect to the nature of the cause, and all reasoning from final causes, must be given up as fallacious." Physical causes,

as for example, what impulse is to motion, heat to expansion, fusion, and evaporation; the earth to the fall of a stone toward it; the sun and moon to the tides; express a relation different from that between man and any of his voluntary actions; but it cannot be the same as the relation of priority and succession among things or events. Men have been mistaken, in some cases, in taking the circumstances of the succession of one event to another as a proof of their relation as cause and effect; but even that shows

that, in the fixed opinion of mankind, constant succession, when there is an appearance of the dependence of one thing upon another, implies more than mere succession, and that what is considered as the cause has an efficiency either from itself or by derivation, by which the effect is brought to pass. It is truly observed by Dr. Brown, (Procedure, &c, of the Human Understanding,) "We find by observation and experience that such and such effects are produced; but when we

attempt to think of the reason why, and the manner how the causes work those effects, then we are at a stand, and all our reasoning is precarious, or at best but probable conjecture." From hence however it would be a ridiculous conclusion, that because we are ignorant of the manner in which physical causes act, they do not act at all; or that none such exist in the ordinarily received sense; that is, that the effect is not dependent upon what is called the cause, and that the presence of the latter,

according to the established laws of nature, is not necessary to the effect, so that without it the effect would not follow. The efficient cause may be latent, but the physical cause is that through which it operates, and must be supposed to have an adaptation to convey the power, so to speak, in some precise mode, by mechanical or other means, to the result, or there could neither be ingenuity and contrivance in the works of art, nor wisdom in the creation. A watch might indicate the

hour without wheels, and a clod might give as copious a light to the planetary system as the sun. If the doctrine of Hume denies efficient causes, it contradicts all consciousness and the experience founded upon it; if it applies only to physical causes, it either confounds them with efficient causes, or says in paradoxical language, only what has been better said by others, and that without any danger of involving either absurd or dangerous consequences. "When an event is produced

according to a known law of nature, the law of nature is called the cause of that event.

But a law of nature is not the efficient cause of any event; it is only the rule according to which the efficient cause acts. A law is a thing conceived in the mind of a rational being, not a thing which has a real existence, and therefore like a motive, it can neither act nor be acted upon, and consequently cannot be an efficient cause. If there be no being that acts according to that law, it

produces no effect." (Reid's Essays.) "All things that are done in the world, are done immediately by God himself, or by created intelligent beings; matter being evidently not at all capable of any laws or powers whatever, any more than it is capable of intelligence; excepting only this one negative power, that every part of it will, of itself, always and necessarily continue in that state, whether of rest or motion, wherein it at present is. So that all those things which we commonly say are the effects of the

natural powers of matter and laws of motion, of gravitation, attraction, or the like, are indeed, (if we will speak strictly and properly,) the effects of God's acting upon matter continually, and every moment, either immediately by himself, or immediately by some created intelligent beings. Consequently there is no such thing as what men commonly call the course of nature, or the powers of nature. The course of nature, truly and properly speaking, is nothing else but the will of God

producing certain effects in a continued, regular, constant, and uniform manner." (Dr. Samuel Clarke.)

The true state of the case appears to be, 1 That there are efficient causes, and that the relation between them and their effects is necessary, since, without the operation of the efficient, the effect would not take place. This we find in ourselves, and we proceed therefore upon the surest ground when we ascribe effects which are above human power, to a

causation which is more than human, and, in the case of the phenomena of universal nature, to a. Divine cause, or in other words to God. 2. That there are physical causes, between which and their effects there is a relation or connection very different to that of a mere order of succession, which in fact is a relation which entirely excludes the idea of causation in any sense. According to the present established order of nature, this also may be termed a necessary connection, although not necessary in

the sense of its being the only method by which the infinite and first efficient could produce the effect. His resources are doubtless boundless; but having established a certain order in nature, or, in other words, having given certain powers and properties to matter, with reference to a mutual operation of different bodies upon each other, his supreme efficiency, his causing power, takes its direction, and displays itself in this order, and is modified by the pre-established and constantly upheld

properties through and by which it operates. So far, and in this sense, the relation between physical causes and effects is a necessary one, and the doctrine of final causes is thus established by those wondrous arrangements and adaptations in the different parts of nature, and in individual bodies, which carry on, and conduct the ever-acting efficiency of God to those wise and benevolent ends which he has proposed. Thus the sun, by virtue of a previously established adaptation between its own

qualities, the earth's atmosphere and the human eye, is the necessary cause of light and vision, though the true efficient be the Creator himself, ever present to his own arrangements; as the spring of a watch is the necessary cause of the motion of the wheels and indices though the efficient, in the proper sense, is the artist himself who framed the whole. In these cases there is, however, this difference to be observed, though it affects not the argument of a secondary physical

causation, that the maker of a watch, finding certain bodies, endued with certain primary properties, may array them one against the other, and so leave his work to go on without his constant impulse and interposition; but in nature, the primary properties of matter, and its existence itself are derived and dependent, and need the constant upholding of Him who spake them out of nothing, and "by whom they all consist."

The relation of cause and effect according to the common sense and observation of mankind, being thus established, (1) we proceed to the arguments which are founded upon it.

(1) The language of every nation is formed on the connection between cause and effect. For in every language there are not only many words directly expressing ideas of this subject, such as cause, efficiency, effect, production, produce, effectuate, create, generate,

&c, or words equivalent to these; but every verb in every language, except the intransitive impersonal verbs, and the verb substantive, involves, of course, causation or efficiency, and refers always to an agent, or cause, in such a manner, that without the operation of this cause or agent, the verb would have no meaning.-All mankind, except a few Atheistical and skeptical philosophers, have thus agreed in acknowledging this connection, and they have acknowledged it as fully as

others in their customary language. They have spoken exactly as other men speak, and the connection between cause and effect is as often declared in their conversation and writings, and as much relied on, as in those of other men. (DWIGHT'S THEOLOGY, vol. i, p. 5.) The existence of God, once communicated to us by his own revelation, direct or traditional, is capable of ample proof, and receives an irresistible corroborative evidence, a posteriori.

An argument a priori, is an argument from something antecedent to something consequent; from principle to corollary; from cause to effect. An argument a posteriori, on the contrary, is an argument from consequent to antecedent, from effect to cause. Both these kinds of proof have been resorted to in support of the doctrine of the existence of God; but it is on the latter only that any dependence can be placed, and the demonstration is too strong to need a doubtful auxiliary.

The first argument, a posteriori, for the existence of a God, is drawn from our own actual existence, and that of other beings around its. This, by an obvious error, has sometimes been called an argument a priori; but if our existence is made use of to prove the existence of a supreme Creator, it is unquestionably an argument which proceeds from consequent to antecedent, from effect to cause. This ancient, and obvious demonstration has been placed in different views by different writers.

Locke has, in substance, thus stated it. Every man knows with absolute certainty, that he himself exists. He knows also that he did not always exist, but began to be. It is clearly certain to him, that his existence was caused and not fortuitous, and was produced by a cause adequate to the production. By an adequate cause, is invariably intended, a cause possessing and exerting an efficacy sufficient to bring any effect to pass. In the present case, an adequate cause is one possessing,

and exerting all the understanding necessary to contrive, and the power necessary to create, such a being as the man in question. This cause is what we are accustomed to call God. The understanding necessary to contrive, and the power necessary to create a being compounded of the human soul and body, admit of no limits. He who can contrive and create such a being, can contrive and create anything. He who actually contrived and created man, certainly contrived and created all things.

The same argument is given more copiously, but with great clearness, by Mr. Howe:-

"We therefore begin with God's existence; for the evincing of which, we may be most assured, First, that there hath been somewhat or other from all eternity; or that, looking backward, somewhat of real being must be confessed eternal. Let such as have not been used to think of any thing more than what they could see with their eyes, and to whom reasoning only seems difficult because

they have not tried what they can do in it, but use their thoughts a little, and by moving them a few easy steps, they will soon find themselves as sure of this as that they see, or hear, or understand, or are anything.

"For being sure that something now is, (that you see, for instance, of are something,) you must then acknowledge, that certainly something always was, and hath ever been, or been from all eternity; or else you must say, that, some time, nothing was; or that

all being once was not. And so, since you find that something now is, there was a time when all being did begin to be; that is, that till that time there was nothing; but now, at that time something first began to be. For what can be plainer than that if all being some time was not, and now some being is, everything of being had a beginning. And thence it would follow, that some being, that is, the first that ever began to be, did of itself start up out of nothing, or made itself to

be when before nothing was.

"But now, do you not plainly see that it is altogether impossible anything should do so; that is, when it was as yet nothing, and when nothing; at all as yet was, that it should make itself, or come into being of itself? For surely making itself is doing something. But can that which is nothing do anything? Unto all doing there must be some doer. Wherefore a thing must be before it can do anything; and therefore

it would follow, that it was before it was; or was and was not, was something and nothing, at the same time. Yea, and that it was diverse from itself; for a cause must be a distinct thing from that which is caused by it. Wherefore it is most apparent, that some being hath ever been, or did never begin to be.

"Whence, farther, it is also evident, Secondly, that some being was uncaused, or was ever of itself without any cause. For what never was from another had never any cause, since

nothing could be its own cause. And somewhat, as appears from what hath been said, never was from another. Or it may be plainly argued thus; that either some being was uncaused, or all being was caused. But if all being was caused, then someone at least was the cause of itself; which hath been already shown impossible. Therefore the expression commonly used concerning the first being, that it was of itself, is only to be taken negatively, that is, that it was not of another; not positively, as if it did some

time make itself. Or what there is positive signified by that form of speech, is only to be taken thus, that it was a being of that nature, as that it was impossible it should ever not have been; not that it did ever of itself step out of not being into being.

"And now it is hence farther evident, Thirdly, that some being is independent upon any other, that is, whereas it already appears that some being did never depend on any other, as a productive cause, and was not

beholden to any other, that it might come into being; it is thereupon equally evident that it is simply independent, or cannot be beholden to any for its continued being. For what did never need a productive cause, doth as little need a sustaining or conserving cause. And to make this more plain, either some being is independent, or all being is dependent. But there is nothing without the compass of all being whereon it may depend.

Wherefore to say, that all being doth depend, is to say, it depends on nothing, that is, that it depends not. For to depend on nothing, is not to depend. It is therefore a manifest contradiction to say that all being doth depend; against which it is no relief to urge, that all beings do circularly depend on one another. (2) For so, however the whole circle or sphere of being should depend on nothing; or one at last depend on itself, which negatively taken, as before, is true, and the thing we contend for-that one, the common

support, of all the rest, depends not on anything without itself.

(2) The notion of an infinite series of caused and successive beings is absurd; for of this infinite series, either some one part has not been successive to any other, or else all the several parts of it have been successive. If someone part of it was not successive, then it had a first part, which destroys the supposition of its infinity. If all the several parts of it have been successive, then have they

all once been future: but if they have all been future, a time may be conceived when none of them had existence: and if so, then it follows, either that all the parts and consequently the whole of this infinite series must have arisen from nothing, which is absurd; or else, that there must be something in the whole, beside what is contained in all the parts, which is also absurd. See Clarke's Demonstration, and Woolaston's Religion of Nature. "A chain," says Dr.

Paley, "composed of an infinite number of links can no more support itself, than a chain composed of a finite number of links. If we increase the number of links from ten to a hundred, and from a hundred to a thousand, &c, we make not the smallest approach, we observe not the smallest tendency toward self-support."

"Whence also it is plainly consequent, Fourthly, that such a Being is necessary, or doth necessarily exist: that is, that it is of such a nature as that, it could not

or cannot but be. For what is in being, neither by its own choice, nor any other's, is necessarily. But what was not made by itself, (which hath been shown to be impossible,) nor by any other, (as it hath been proved something was not,) it is manifest, it neither depended on its choice, nor any other's that it is.

And therefore, its existence is not owing to choice at all, but to the necessity of its own nature.

Wherefore it is always by a simple, absolute, natural

necessity; being of a, nature to which it is altogether repugnant and impossible ever not to have been, or ever to cease from being. And now having gone thus far, and being assured, that hitherto we feel the ground firm under us; that is, having gained a full certainty, that there is an eternal, uncaused, independent, necessary Being, and therefore actually and everlastingly existing; we may advance one step farther.

"And with equal assurance add, Fifthly, that this

eternal, independent, uncaused, necessary Being, is self-active; that is, (which is at present meant,) not such as acts upon itself, but that which hath the power of acting upon other things, in and of itself, without deriving it from any other. Or at least that there is such a Being as is eternal, uncaused, &c, having the power of action in and of itself. For either such a Being as hath been already evinced is of itself active or inactive, or hath the power of action of itself or not. If we will say the latter, let it be considered

what we say, and to what purpose we say it.

"1. We are to weigh what it is we affirm, when we speak of an, eternal, uncaused, independent, necessary Being, which is of itself totally inactive, or destitute of any active power. If we will say there is some such thing, we will confess, when we have called it something, it is a very silly, despicable, idle something, and a something, (if we look upon it alone,) as good as nothing.

For there is but little odds between being nothing, and being able to do nothing. We will again confess, eternity, self-origination, independency, necessity of existence, to be very great and highly dignifying attributes; and import a most inconceivable excellency. For what higher glory can we ascribe to any being, than to acknowledge it to have been from eternity of itself, (3) without being beholden to any other, and to be such as that it can be and cannot but be in the same state, self-subsisting,

and self-sufficient to all eternity? But can our reason either direct or endure, that we should so incongruously misplace so magnificent attributes as these, and ascribe the prime glory of the most excellent Being unto that which is next to nothing? But if any in the meantime will be so inconsiderate as to say this, let it

(3) "We will acknowledge an impropriety in this word, and its conjugate, self-originate, sometimes hereafter used: which yet is recompensed by their

conveniences; as they may perhaps find who shall make trial how to express the sense intended by them in other words. And they are used without suspicion, that it can be thought they are meant to signify as if God ever gave original to himself; but in the negative sense, that he never received it from any other; yea, and that he is, what is more than equivalent to his being self- caused; namely, a Being of himself so excellent as not to need or be capable to admit any cause."

"2. Be considered to what purpose they say it. Is it to exclude a necessary self-active Being? But it can signify nothing to that purpose. For such a Being they will be forced to acknowledge, let them do what they can (beside putting out their own eyes) notwithstanding. For why do they acknowledge any necessary being at all, that was ever of itself? Is it not because they cannot, otherwise, for their hearts, tell how it was ever possible that anything at all could come into being?

But, finding that something is, they are compelled to acknowledge that something hath ever been, necessarily and of itself. No other account could be given how other things came to be. But what? Doth it signify anything toward the giving an account of the original of all other things, to suppose only an eternal, self-subsisting, inactive Being? Did that cause other things to be? Will not their own breath choke them if they attempt to utter the self-contradicting words, an inactive cause, which is efficient or the author of

anything? And do they not see they are as far from their mark, or do no more toward the assigning an original to all other things, by supposing an eternal, inactive being only, than if they supposed none at all? That which can do nothing, can no more be the productive cause of another, than that which is nothing. Wherefore, by the same reason that hath constrained us to acknowledge an eternal, uncaused, independent, necessary Being, we are also unavoidably led to acknowledge this Being to

be self-active, or such as hath the power of action in and of itself; or that there is certainly such a Being, who is the cause of all the things which our senses tell us are existent in the world.

"For what else is left us to say or think? Will we think fit to say that all things we behold were, as they now are, necessarily existent from all eternity? That were to speak against our own eyes, which continually behold the rise and fall of living things, of whatsoever sort or kind, that can come under their

notice. For all the things we behold are, in some respect or other, internally or externally, continually changing, and therefore could never long be beheld as they are. And to say then, they have been continually changing from eternity, and yet have been necessarily, is unintelligible and flat nonsense. For what is necessarily, is always the same; and what is in this or that posture necessarily, (that is, by an intrinsic, simple and absolute necessity, which must be here meant,) must be ever

so. Wherefore to suppose the world in this or that state necessarily, and yet that such a state is changeable, is an impossible and self-contradicting supposition.

"But now, since we find that the present state of things is changeable, and actually changing, and that what is changeable is not necessarily, and of itself; and since it is evident that there is some necessary Being, otherwise nothing could ever have been; and that without action nothing could be from it; since also

all change imports somewhat of passion, and all passion supposes action; and all action, active power; and active power, an original seat or subject, which is self-active, or hath the power of action in and of itself; (for there could be no derivation of it from that which hath it not, and no first derivation, but from that which hath it originally of itself; and a first derivation there must be, since all things that are, or ever have been, furnished with it, and not of themselves, must either

immediately or immediately have derived it from that which had it of itself;) it is therefore manifest that there is a necessary, self-active Being, the Cause and Author of this perpetually variable state and frame of things.

"And hence, since we can frame no notion of life which self-active power doth not, at least, comprehend, (as upon trial we shall find that we cannot,) it is consequent, Sixthly, that this Being is also originally vital, and the

root of all vitality, such as hath life in or of itself, and from whence it is propagated to every other living thing." (Living Temple.) The self-existent, eternal, self-active, and vital Being, whose necessary existence has thus been proved, is also intelligent; of which the demonstration a posteriori is large and convincing. For since we are speaking of a Being who is himself independent, and upon whom all things depend; and from the dependence of everything we see around us, we necessarily

infer a cause of them, whom we do not see, but who must himself be independent, and from whom they must have originated; their actual existence, and their being upheld and sustained, prove his power, and their arrangement, and wise and evidently intentional disposition, prove also his intelligence.

In the proposition that the self-existent and original cause of all things must be an intelligent Being, Dr. Samuel Clarke justly observes, lies the main

question between us and Atheists. "For that something must be self-existent, and that that which is self-existent must be eternal and infinite, and the original cause of all things, will not bear much dispute. But all Atheists, whether they hold the world to be of itself eternal, both as to matter and form, or whether they hold the matter to be eternal, and the form contingent, or whatever hypothesis they frame, have always asserted and must maintain, either directly or indirectly, that the self-

existent Being is not an intelligent Being; but either pure inactive matter, or (which in other words is the very same thing,) a mere necessary agent. For a mere necessary agent must of necessity either be plainly and directly in the grossest sense unintelligent, which was the notion of the ancient Atheists of the self-existent Being; or else its intelligence, according to Spinoza and some moderns, must be wholly separate from any power of will and choice, which in respect of excellency and

perfection, or indeed to any common sense, is the very same thing as no intelligence at all. Now that the self-existent Being is not such a blind and unintelligent necessity, but in the most proper sense an understanding and really active Being, does not indeed so obviously and directly appear to us by considerations a priori; but d posteriori almost everything in the world demonstrates to us this great truth, and affords undeniable arguments to prove that the world and all things therein are the

effects of an intelligent and knowing Cause.

"And 1st. Since in general there are manifestly in things various kinds of powers, and very different excellencies and degrees of perfection; it must needs be, that, in the order of causes and effects, the cause must always be more excellent than the effect: and consequently, the self-existent Being, whatever that be supposed to be, must of necessity (being the original of all things) contain in itself the sum and highest degree of all

the perfections of all things. Not because that which is self-existent, must therefore have all possible perfections: (for this, though most certainly true in itself, yet cannot be so easily demonstrated a priori.) but because it is impossible that any effect should have any perfection, which was not in the cause. For if it had, then that perfection would be caused by nothing; which is a plain contradiction. Now an unintelligent being, it is evident, cannot be endued with all the perfections of all things in the world;

because intelligence is one of those perfections. All things therefore cannot arise from an unintelligent original: and consequently the self-existent Being must of necessity be intelligent.

"There is no possibility for an Atheist to avoid the force of this argument any other way, than by asserting one of these two things: either that there is no intelligent Being at all in the universe; or that intelligence is no distinct perfection, but merely a composition of figure and

motion, as color and sounds are vulgarly supposed to be. Of the former of these assertions; every man's own consciousness is an abundant confutation. For they who contend that beasts are mere machines, have yet never presumed to conjecture that men are so too. And that the latter assertion (in which the main strength of Atheism lies) is most absurd and impossible, shall be shown.

"For since in men in particular there is undeniably that power,

which we call thought, intelligence, consciousness, perception or knowledge; there must of necessity either have been from eternity without any original cause at all, an infinite succession of men, whereof no one has had a necessary, but everyone a dependent and communicated being; or else these beings, endued with perception and consciousness, must at some time or other have arisen purely out of that which had no such quality as sense, perception, or consciousness; or else they

must have been produced by some intelligent superior Being. There never was nor can be any Atheist whatsoever, that can deny but one of these three suppositions must be the truth. If, therefore, the two former can be proved to be false and impossible, the latter must be owned to be demonstrably true. Now that the first is impossible, is evident from what has been already said.

And that the second is likewise impossible, may be thus demonstrated:-

"If perception or intelligence be any real distinct quality, or perfection; and not a mere effect or composition of unintelligent figure and motion; then beings endued with perception or consciousness, can never possibly have arisen purely out of that which itself had no such quality as perception or consciousness; because nothing can ever give to aft-other any perfection which it hath not either actually in itself, or at least in a higher degree. This is very evident; because, if

anything could give to another any perfection which it has not itself, that perfection would be caused absolutely by nothing: which is a plain contradiction. If anyone here replies, (as Mr. Gildon has done in a letter to Mr. Blount,) that colors, sounds, tastes, and the like, arise from figure and motion, which have no such qualities in themselves; or that figure, divisibility, mobility, and other qualities of matter, are confessed to be given from God, who yet cannot, without extreme

blasphemy, be said to have any such qualities himself; and that therefore in like manner, perception or intelligence may arise out of that which has no intelligence itself; the answer is very easy: First, that colors, sounds, tastes, and the like, are by no means effects arising from mere figure and motion; there being nothing in the bodies themselves, the objects of the senses, that has any manner of similitude to any of these qualities; but they are plainly thoughts or modifications of the mind

itself, which is an intelligent being; and are not properly caused, but only occasioned, by the impressions of figure and motion. Nor will it at all help an Atheist (as to the present question) though we should here make for him, (that we may allow him the greatest possible advantage,) even that most absurd supposition, that the mind itself is nothing but mere matter, and not at all an immaterial substance. For, even supposing it to be mere matter, yet he must needs confess it to be such

matter, as is endued not only with figure and motion, but also with the quality of intelligence and perception: and consequently, as to the present question, it will still come to the same thing; that colors, sounds, and the like, which are not qualities of unintelligent bodies, but perceptions of mind, can no more be caused by, or arise from mere unintelligent figure, and motion, than color can be a triangle, or sound a square, or something be caused by nothing. Secondly; as to the other

part of the objection, that figure, divisibility, mobility, and other qualities of matter, are (as we ourselves acknowledge) given it from God, who yet cannot, without extreme blasphemy, be said to have any such qualities himself; and that, therefore, in like manner, perception or intelligence may arise out of that which has no intelligence itself; the answer is still easier: that figure, divisibility, mobility, and other such like qualities of matter, are not real, proper, distinct, and positive powers, but

only negative qualities, deficiencies, or imperfections. And though no cause can communicate to its effect any real perfection which it has not itself, yet the effect may easily have many imperfections, deficiencies, or negative qualities, which are not in the cause. Though therefore figure, divisibility, mobility, and the like, (which are mere negations, as all limitations, and all defects of powers are,) may be in the effect, and not in the cause; yet intelligence, (which I now suppose, and

shall prove immediately, to be a distinct quality; and which no man can say is a mere negation,) cannot possibly be so.

"Having therefore thus demonstrated, that if perception or intelligence be supposed to be a distinct quality or perfection, (though even but of matter only, if the Atheist pleases,) and not a mere effect or composition of unintelligent figure and motion; then beings endued with perception or consciousness can never have arisen purely out of

that which had no such quality as perception or consciousness; because nothing can ever give to another any perfection, which it has not itself: it will easily appear, secondly, that perception or intelligence is really such a distinct quality or perfection, and not possibly a mere effect or composition of unintelligent figure and motion: and that for this plain reason, because intelligence is not figure, and consciousness is not motion. For whatever can arise from, or be

compounded of any things, is still only those very things of which it was compounded. And if infinite compositions or divisions be made eternally, the things will be but eternally the same. And all their possible effects can never be anything but repetitions of the same. For instance: all possible changes, compositions, or divisions of figure, are still nothing but figure: and all possible compositions or effects of motion, can eternally be nothing but mere motion. If therefore there ever was a time when

there was nothing in the universe but matter and motion, there never could have been anything else therein but matter and motion. And it would have been as impossible, there should ever have existed any such thing as intelligence or consciousness; or even any such thing as light, or heat, or sound, or color, or any of those we call secondary qualities of matter; as it is now impossible for motion to be blue or red, or for a triangle to be transformed into a sound.

That which has been apt to deceive men in this matter, is this, that they imagine compounds to be somewhat really different from that of which they are compounded: which is a very great mistake. For all the things, of which men so judge, either, if they be really different, are not compounds nor effects of what men judge them to be, but are something totally distinct; as when the vulgar think colors and sounds to be properties inherent in bodies, when indeed they are purely thoughts of the mind: or

else, if they be really compounds and effects, then they are not different, but exactly the same that ever they were; as, when two triangles put together make a square, that square is still nothing but two triangles; or when a square cut in halves makes two triangles, those two triangles are still only the two halves of a square; or when the mixture of blue and yellow powder makes a green, that green is still nothing but blue and yellow intermixed, as is plainly visible by the help of microscopes. And in

short, everything by composition, division or motion, is nothing else but the very same it was before, taken either in whole or in parts, or in different place or order. He therefore that will affirm intelligence to be the effect of a system of unintelligent matter in motion, must either affirm intelligence to be a mere name or external denomination of certain figures and motions, and that it differs from unintelligent figures and motions, no other-wise than as a circle or triangle differs from a square,

which is evidently absurd: or else he must suppose it to be a real distinct quality, arising from certain motions of a system of matter not in itself intelligent; and then this no less evidently absurd consequence would follow, that one quality inhered in another; for, in that case, not the substance itself, the particles of which the system consists, but the mere mode, the particular mode of motion and figure would be intelligent.

"That the self-existent and original cause of all things,

is an intelligent Being, appears abundantly from the excellent variety, order, beauty, and wonderful contrivance, and fitness of all things in the world, to their proper and respective ends. Since therefore things are thus, it must unavoidably be granted, (even by the most obstinate Atheist,) either that all plants and animals are originally the work of an intelligent Being, and created by him in time; or that having been from eternity in the same order and method they now are in, they are an eternal

effect of an eternal intelligent Cause continually exerting his infinite power and wisdom; or else that without any self-existent original at all, they have been derived one from another in an eternal succession, by an infinite progress of dependent causes. The first of these three ways is, the conclusion we assert: the second, (so far as the cause of Atheism is concerned,) comes to the very same thing: and the third I have already shown to be absolutely impossible and a contradiction.

"Supposing it was possible that the form of the world, and all the visible things contained therein, with the order, beauty, and exquisite fitness of their parts; nay, supposing that even intelligence itself, with consciousness and thought, in all the beings we know, could possibly be the result or effect of mere unintelligent matter, figure, and motion; (which is the most unreasonable and impossible supposition in the world;) yet even still there would remain an undeniable demonstration, that the self-existent Being,

(whatever it be supposed to be,) must be intelligent. For even these principles themselves, unintelligent figure and motion, could never have possibly existed, without there had been before them an intelligent cause. I instance in motion. It is evident there is now such a thing as motion in the world; which either began at some time or other, or was eternal. If it began at any time, then the question is granted, that the First Cause is an intelligent being: for mere unintelligent matter, and that at rest, it is manifest,

could never of itself begin to move. On the contrary, if motion was eternal, it was either eternally caused by some eternal intelligent Being, or it must of itself be necessary and self-existent; or else, without any necessity in its own nature, and without any external necessary cause, it must have existed from eternity by an endless successive communication. If motion was eternally caused by some eternal intelligent Being; this also is granting the question as to the present dispute. If it was of itself necessary and self-

existent; then it follows that it must be a contradiction in terms, to suppose any matter to be at rest: beside, (as there is no end of absurdities,) it must also imply a contradiction, to suppose that there might possibly have been originally more or less motion in the universe than there actually was: which is so very absurd a consequence, that Spinoza himself, though he expressly asserts all things to be necessary, yet seems ashamed here to speak out his opinion, or rather plainly contradicts himself

in the question about the original of motion. But if it be said, lastly, that motion, without any necessity in its own nature, and without any external necessary cause, has existed from eternity, merely by an endless successive communication, as Spinoza, inconsistently enough, seems to assert; this I have before shown to be a plain contradiction. It remains therefore that motion must of necessity be originally caused by something that is intelligent; or else there never could have been any

such thing as motion in the world. And consequently the self-existent Being, the original Cause of all things, (whatever it is supposed to be,) must of necessity be an intelligent Being."

The argument from the existence of motion to the existence of an Intelligent First Cause is so convincing, that the farther illustration of it, in which the absurdities of Atheism are exhibited in another view, will not be unacceptable.

"Consider that all this motion and motive power

must have some source and fountain diverse from the dull and sluggish matter moved thereby, unto which it already hath appeared impossible that it should originally and essentially belong.

"Also that the mighty active Being, which hath been proved necessarily existent, and whereto it must first belong, if we suppose it destitute of the self-moderating principle of wisdom and counsel, cannot but be always exerting its motive power, invariably used to the same

degree, that is, to its very utmost, and can never cease or fail to do so. For its act knows no limit but that of its power, (if this can have any,) and its power is essential to it, and its essence is necessary.

"Farther, that the motion impressed upon the matter of the universe, must hereupon necessarily have received a continual increase ever since it came into being.

"That supposing this motive power to have been exerted from eternity, it must have been increased

long ago to an infinite excess.

"That hence the coalition of the particles of matter for the forming of anything, had been altogether impossible: for let us suppose this exerted motive power to have been, any instant, but barely sufficient for such a formation; because that could not be dispatched in an instant, it would, by its continual increase, be grown so over-sufficient, as, in the next instant, to dissipate the particles, but now beginning to unite.

"At least, it would be most apparent, that if ever such a frame of things as we now behold could have been produced, that motive power, increased to so infinite an excess, must have shattered the whole frame in pieces, many an age ago, or rather never have permitted that such a thing as we call an age could possibly have been.

"Our experience gives us not to observe any such destructive or remarkable changes in the course of nature, and this indeed (as was long ago foretold) is

the great argument of the Atheistical scoffers in these latter days, that things remain as they were from the beginning of the creation to this day. But let it be soberly weighed, how it is possible that the general consistency, which we observe in things through, out the universe, and their steady orderly posture, can stand with this momentary increase of motion.

"For we see when we throw a stone out of our hand, whatever of the impressed force it imparts to the air,

through which it makes its way, or whatever degree of it vanishes of itself, it yet retains a part a considerable time, which carries it all the length of its journey, and does not vanish and die away on the sudden. So when we here consider in the continual momentary renewal of the same force, always necessarily going forth from the same mighty agent, without any moderation or restraint, that every following impetus doth so immediately overtake the former, that whatever we

can suppose lost, is yet abundantly over-supplied; upon the whole, it cannot fail to be ever growing, and before now must have grown to that all-destroying excess before mentioned.

"It is therefore evident, that as without the supposition of a self-active Being, there could be no such thing as motion, so without the supposition of an intelligent Being, (that is, that the same Being be both self-active and intelligent,) there could be no regular motion, such as

is absolutely necessary to the forming and continuing of any of the compacted bodily substances, which our eyes behold every day; yea, or of any whatsoever, suppose we their figures, their shapes, to be as rude, as deformed, and useless as we can imagine, much less such as the exquisite compositions, and the exact order of things in the universe do evidently require and discover." (HOWE'S Living Temple.)

The proof that the original cause of all things is an intelligent Being, alluded to

above by Dr. S. Clarke, as exhibited by the excellent variety, order, beauty, and wonderful contrivance and fitness of all things in the world to their proper and respective ends, has, from the copious and almost infinite illustration of which it is capable, been made a distinct branch of theological science. It is the most obvious and popular, and therefore the most useful argument in favor of the intelligence of that Being of infinite perfections, we call God; it is that to which the Holy Scriptures refer us for the

confirmation of their own doctrine on this subject, and it has been constantly resorted to by all writers on this first principle of religion in every age. When it has been considered separately, and the proofs from nature have been largely given, it has been designated "Natural Theology," and has given rise to many important works, equally entertaining, instructive, and convincing. (4) The basis, and indeed the plan, of Dr. Paley's Natural Theology, are found in the third and following

chapters of Howe's Living Temple; but the outline has been filled up, and the subject expanded by that able writer with great felicity of illustration, and acute and powerful argument. From the platform of Paley's work, as it may be found in "the Living Temple," I shall give a few extracts, which, though they appear in the "Natural Theology" in a more expansive form, strengthened by additional examples, and clothed in some of the instances given with a more correct

philosophy, are not superseded. They bear upon the conclusion with an irresistible force, and are expressed with a noble eloquence, though in language a little antiquated in structure.

(4) See Boyle on Final Causes, Ray's Wisdom of God in the Creation, Derham's Astro and Physico Theology, Sturm's Reflections, Paley's Natural Theology, &c.

"As nothing can be produced without a cause, so no cause can work above or beyond its own capacity

and natural aptitude. Whatsoever therefore is ascribed to any cause, above and beyond its ability, all that surplus is ascribed to no cause at all: and so an effect, in that part at least, were supposed without a cause. And if it then follow when an effect is produced, that it had a cause; why doth it not equally follow, when an effect is produced, having manifest characters of wisdom and design upon it, that it had a wise and designing cause? If it be said, there are some fortuitous or casual (at

least undesigned) productions, that look like the effects of wisdom and contrivance, but indeed are not, as the birds so orderly and seasonably making their nests, the bees their comb, and the spider its web, which are capable of no design, that exception needs to be well proved before it be admitted; and that it be plainly demonstrated, both that these creatures are not capable of design, and that there is not a universal, designing cause, from whose directive as well as operative influence, no

imaginable effect or event can be exempted. In which case it will no more be necessary, that every creature that is observed steadily to work toward an end, should itself design and know it, than that an artificer's tools should know what he is doing with them; but if they do not, it is plain he must. And surely it lies upon them who so except, to prove in this case what they say and not to be so precarious as to beg, or think us so easy as to grant, so much, only because they have thought fit to say it, or would fain

have it so, that is, that this or that strange event "happened without any designing cause.

"But, however, I would demand, of such as make this exception, whether they think there be any effect at all, to which a designing cause was necessary, or which they will judge impossible to have been otherwise produced than by the direction and contrivance of wisdom and counsel? I little doubt but there are thousands of things, labored and wrought by the

hand of man, which they would presently, upon first sight, pronounce to be the effects of skill, and not of chance; yea, if they only considered their frame and shape, though they understood not their use and end, they would surely think at least some effects or other sufficient to argue to us a designing cause.

And would they but soberly consider and resolve what characters or footsteps of wisdom and design might be reckoned sufficient to put us out of doubt, would they not, upon comparing,

be brought to acknowledge that there are no where any more conspicuous and manifest, than in the things daily in view, that go ordinarily, with us, under the name of works of nature? Whence it is plainly consequent, that what men commonly call universal nature, if they would be content no longer to lurk in the darkness of an obscure and uninterpreted word, they must confess is nothing else but common providence, that is, the universal power which is everywhere active in the

world, in conjunction with the unerring wisdom which guides and moderates all its exertions and operations, or the wisdom which directs and governs that power. They must therefore see cause to acknowledge that an exact order and disposition of parts in very neat and elegant compositions, do plainly argue wisdom and skill in the contrivance; only they will distinguish and say, it is so in the effects of art, but not of nature. What is this, but to deny in particular what they granted in general? To

make what they have said signify nothing more than if they had said, such exquisite order of parts is the effect of wisdom, where it is the effect of wisdom; but it is not the effect of wisdom, where it is not the effect of wisdom; and to trifle, instead of giving a reason why things are so? And whence take they their advantage for this trifling, or do they hope to hide their folly in it, but that they think while what is meant by art is known, what is meant by nature cannot be known? But if it be not known, how can

they tell but their distinguishing members are coincident, and run into one? Yea, and if they would allow the thing itself to speak, and the effect to confess and dictate the name of its own cause, how plain is it that they do run into one; and that the expression imports no impropriety, which we somewhere find in Cicero, The art of nature; or rather, that nature is nothing else but Divine art, at least in as near an analogy as between any things Divine and human? But, that this matter (even the thing

itself, waiving for the present the consideration of names,) may be a little more narrowly discussed and searched into, let some curious piece of workmanship be offered to such a skeptic's view, the making whereof he did not see, nor of anything like it, and we will suppose him not told that this was made by the hand of any man, nor that he hath anything to guide his judgment about the way of its becoming what it is, but only his own view of the thing itself; and yet he shall presently, without

hesitation, pronounce, this was the effect of much skill. I would here inquire, why do you so pronounce? Or, What is the reason of this your judgment? Surely he would not say he hath no reason at all for this so confident and unwavering determination; for then he would not be determined, but speak by chance, and be indifferent to say that or anything else. Somewhat or other there must be, that, when he is asked, is this the effect of skill? Shall so suddenly and irresistibly captivate him into an assent that it is so, that he

cannot think otherwise. Nay, if a thousand men were asked the same question, they would as undoubting say the same thing; and then, since there is a reason for this judgment, what can be devised to be the reason, but that there are so manifest characters and evidences of skill in the composure, as ate not attributable to anything else? Now here I would farther demand, is there anything in this reason? Yea, or No?

Doth it signify anything, or is it of any value for the purpose for which it is alleged? Surely it is of very great, inasmuch as, when it is considered, it leaves it not in a man's power to think anything else; and what can be said more potently and efficaciously to demonstrate? But now, if this reason signify anything, it signifies thus much; that wheresoever there are equal characters, and evidences of skill, a skilful agent must be acknowledged. And so it will, (in spite of cavil,) conclude universally, and

abstractedly, from what we can suppose distinctly signified by the terms of art and nature, that whatsoever effect hath such, or equal characters of skill upon it, did proceed from a skilful cause. That is, that if this effect be said to be from a skilful cause, as having manifest characters of skill upon it, then every such effect, that hath equally manifest characters of skill upon it, must be, with equal reason, concluded to be from a skilful cause.

"We will acknowledge skill to act, and wit to contrive, to be very distinguishable things, and in reference to some works, (as the making some curious automaton, or self-moving engine,) are commonly lodged in divers subjects; that is, the contrivance exercises the wit and invention of one, and the making, the manual skill and dexterity of others: but the manifest characters of both will be seen in the effect, - That is, the curious elaborateness of each several part shows the latter, and the order and

dependence of parts, and their conspiracy to one common end, the former. Each betokens design; or at least the smith or carpenter must be understood to design his own part, that is, to do as he was directed: both together do plainly bespeak an agent that knew what he did; and that the thing was not done by chance, or was not the casual product of only being busy at random, or making a careless stir, without aiming at anything. And this, no man that is in his wits would, upon sight of the whole

frame, more doubt to assent unto, than that two and two make four. And he would certainly be thought mad, that should profess to think that only by some one's making a bustle among several small fragments of brass, iron, and wood, these parts happened to be thus curiously formed, and came together into this frame, of their own accord.

"Or lest this should be thought to intimate too rude a representation of their conceit who think this world to have fallen into

this frame and order wherein it is, by the agitation of the moving parts, or particles of matter, without the direction of a wise mover; and that we may also make the case as plain as is possible to the most ordinary capacity, we will suppose (for instance) that one who had never before seen a watch, or anything of that sort, hath now this little engine first offered to his view; can we doubt, but that he would, upon the mere sight of its figure, structure, and the very curious workmanship

which we will suppose appearing in it, presently acknowledge the artificer's hand? But if he were also made to understand the use and purpose for which it serves, and it were distinctly shown him how each thing contributes, and all things in this little fabric concur to this purpose, the exact measuring and dividing of time by minutes, hours, and months, he would certainly both confess and praise the great ingenuity of the first inventor. But now if a bystander, beholding him in this admiration, would

undertake to show a profounder reach and strain of wit, and should say, Sir, you are mistaken concerning the composition of this so much admired piece; it was not made or designed by the hand or skill of any one; there were only an innumerable company of little atoms or very small bodies, much too small to be perceived by your sense, that were busily frisking and plying to and fro about the place of its nativity; and by a strange chance or a stranger fate, and the necessary laws of that

motion which they were unavoidably put into, by a certain boisterous, undesigning mover, they fell together into this small bulk, so as to compose this very shape and figure, and with this same number and order of parts which you now behold: one squadron of these busy particles (little thinking what they were about) agreeing to make one wheel, and another a second, in that proportion which you see: others of them also falling and becoming fixed in so happy a posture and situation as to describe the

several figures by which the little moving fingers point out the hours of the day, and the day of the month: and all conspired to fall together, each into its own place, in so lucky a juncture, as that the regular motion failed not to ensue which we see is now observed in it, -

what man is either so wise or so foolish, (for it is hard to determine whether the excess or the defect should best qualify him to be of this faith,) as to be capable of being made believe this piece of natural history?

And if anyone should give this account of the production of such a trifle, would he not be thought in jest? But if he persist, and solemnly profess that thus he takes it to have been, would he not be thought in good earnest mad? And let but any sober reason judge whether we have not unspeakably more madness to contend against in such as suppose this world, and the bodies of living creatures, to have fallen into this frame and orderly disposition of parts wherein they are, without the direction of a wise and

designing cause? And whether there be not an incomparably greater number of most wild and arbitrary suppositions in their fiction than in this? Beside the innumerable supposed repetitions of the same strange chances all the world over; even as numberless, not only as productions, but as the changes that continually happen to all the things produced. And if the concourse of atoms could make this world, why not (for it is but little to mention such a thing as this,) a porch, or a temple,

or a house, or a city, as Tully speaks, which were less operous, and much more easy performances?

"It is not to be supposed that all should be astronomers, anatomists, or natural philosophers, that shall read these lines; and therefore it is intended not to insist upon particulars, and to make as little use as is possible of terms that would only be agreeable to that supposition. But surely such general, easy reflections on the frame of the universe, and the order

of parts in the bodies of all sorts of living creatures, as the meanest ordinary understanding is capable of, would soon discover incomparably greater evidence of wisdom and design in the contrivance of these, than in that of a watch or a clock. And if there were any whose understandings are but of that size and measure as to suppose that the whole frame of the heavens serves to no other purpose than to be of some such use to us mortals here on earth as that instrument; if they would but allow themselves

leisure to think and consider, they might discern the most convincing and amazing discoveries of wise contrivance and design (as well as the vastest might and power) in disposing things into so apt a subservience to that meaner end; and that so exact a knowledge is had thereby of times and seasons, days and years, as that the simplest idiot in a country may be able to tell you, when the light of the sun is withdrawn from his eyes, at what time it will return, and when it will

look in at such a window, and when at the other; and by what degrees his days and nights shall either be increased or diminished; and what proportion of time he shall have for his labors in this season of the year, and what in that; without the least suspicion or fear that it shall ever fall out otherwise.

"For let us suppose (what no man can pretend is more impossible, and what any man must confess is less considerable, than what our eyes daily see,) that in some part of the air

near this earth, and within such limits as that the whole scene might be conveniently beheld at one view, there should suddenly appear a little globe of pure flaming light resembling that of the sun, and suppose it fixed as a center to another body or moving about that other as its center, (as this or that hypothesis best pleases us,) which we could plainly perceive to be a proportionally little earth, beautified with little trees and woods, flowery fields and flowing rivulets, with larger lakes into which

these discharge themselves; and suppose we see other planets all of proportionably bigness to the narrow limits assigned them, placed at their due distances, and playing about this supposed earth or sun, so as to measure their shorter and soon absolved days, months, and years, or two, twelve, or thirty years, according to their supposed circuits;- would they not presently, and with great amazement, confess an intelligent contriver and maker of this whole frame, above a Posidonius or any mortal?

And have we not in the present frame of things a demonstration of wisdom and counsel, as far exceeding that which is now supposed, as the making some toy or bauble to please a child is less an argument of wisdom than the contrivance of somewhat that is of apparent and universal use? Or if we could suppose this present state of things to have but newly begun, and ourselves pre-existent, so that we could take notice of the very passing of things out of horrid confusion into the comely

order they are now in, would not this put the matter out of doubt? But might what would yesterday have been the effect of wisdom, better have been brought about by chance, five or six thousand years, or any longer time ago? It speaks not want of evidence in the thing, but want of consideration, and of exercising our understandings, if what were new would not only convince but astonish, and what is old, of the same importance, doth not so much as convince!

"And let them that understand anything of the composition of a human body (or indeed of any living creature) but bethink themselves whether there be not equal contrivance, at least, appearing in the composure of that admirable fabric, as of any the most admired machine or engine devised and made by human skill and wit. If we pitch upon anything of known and common use, as suppose again, a clock or watch, which is no sooner seen than it is acknowledged (as hath been said) the effect of

a designing cause; will we not confess as much of the body of a man? Yea, what comparison is there, when in the structure of some one single member, as a hand, a foot, an eye, or ear, there appears upon a diligent search, unspeakably greater curiosity, whether we consider the variety of parts, their exquisite figuration, or their apt disposition to the distinct uses and ends these members serve for, than is to be seen in any clock or watch? Concerning which uses of the several parts in

man's body, Galen, so largely discoursing in seventeen books, inserts on the leg, this epiphonema, upon the mention of one particular instance of our most wise Maker's provident care:- ' Unto whom (saith he) I compose these commentaries,' (meaning his present work of unfolding the useful figuration of the human body,) 'as certain hymns, or songs of praise, esteeming true piety to consist in this, that I first may know, and then declare to others, his wisdom, power, providence, and goodness,

than in sacrificing to him many hecatombs: and in the ignorance whereof there is greatest impiety, rather than in abstaining from sacrifice.' ' Nor,' (as he adds in the close of that excellent work,)' is the most perfect natural artifice to be seen in man only; but you may find the like industrious design and wisdom of the Author, in any living creature which you shall please to dissect: and by how much the less it is, so much the greater admiration shall it excite in you; which those artists show, that describe some

great thing (contractedly) in a very small space: as that person who lately engraved Phaeton carried in his chariot with his four horses upon a little ring-a most incredible sight! But there is nothing in matters of this nature more strange than in the structure of the leg of a flea.' How much more might it be said of all its inward parts? ' Therefore, (as he adds,) the greatest commodity of such a work accrues not to physicians, but to them who are studious of nature, namely, the knowledge of our Maker's perfection, and

that (as he had said a little above) it establishes the principle of the most perfect theology; which theology is much more excellent than all medicine.'

"It were too great an undertaking, and beyond the designed limits of this discourse, (though it would be to excellent purpose, if it could be done without amusing terms, and in that easy, familiar way as to be capable of common use,) to pursue, and trace distinctly the prints and footsteps of the admirable wisdom

which appears in the structure and frame of this outer temple.

For even our bodies themselves are said to be the temples of the Holy Ghost, 1 Cor. 6:19. And to dwell awhile in the contemplation and discovery of those numerous instances of most apparent, ungainsayable sagacity and providence which offer themselves to view in every part and particle of this fabric: how most commodiously all things are ordered in it! With how

strangely cautious circumspection and foresight not only destructive, but even (perpetually) vexatious and afflicting incongruities are avoided and provided against, to pose ourselves upon the sundry obvious questions that might be put for the evincing of such provident foresight. As for instance, how comes it to pass that the several parts which we find to be double in our bodies, are not single only? Is this altogether by chance? That there are two eyes, ears, nostrils, hands, feet, &c:

what a miserable, shiftless creature had man been, if there had only been allowed him one foot! A seeing, hearing, talking, unmoving statue. That the hand is divided into fingers? Those so conveniently situate, one in so fitly opposite a posture to the rest?

"And what, if someone pair or other of these parts had been universally wanting? The hands, the feet, the eyes, the ears. How great a misery had it inferred upon mankind! and is it only a casualty that it is not so?

That the back bone is composed of so many joints, (twenty-four, beside those of that which is the basis and sustainer of the whole,) and is not all of a piece, by which stooping, or any motion of the head or neck, diverse from that of the whole body, had been altogether impossible; that there is such variety and curiosity in the ways of joining the bones together in that, and other parts of the body, that in some parts they are joined by mere adherence of one to another, either with or without an intervening

medium, and both these ways so

diversely; that others are fastened together by proper jointing, so as to suit and be accompanied with motion, either more obscure or more manifest, and this, either by a deeper, or more superficial insertion of one bone into another, or by a mutual insertion, and that in different ways; and that all these should be so exactly accommodated to the several parts and uses to which they belong and serve;- was all this without

design? Who that views the curious and apt texture of the eye, can think it was not made on purpose to see with; and the ear, upon the like view, for hearing, when so many things must concur that these actions might be performed by these organs, and are found to do so? Or who can think that the sundry little engines belonging to the eye were not made with design to move it upward, downward, to this side or that, or whirl it about as there should be occasion; without which instruments and their appendages, no

such motion could have been? Who, that is not stupidly perverse, can think that the sundry inward parts (which it would require a volume distinctly to speak of, and but to mention them and their uses would too unproportionably swell this part of this discourse) were not made purposely by a designing agent, for the ends they so aptly and constantly serve for? The want of someone among divers whereof, or but a little misplacing, or if things had been but a little otherwise than they are,

had inferred an impossibility that such a creature as man could have subsisted, or been propagated upon the face of the earth. As what if there had not been such a receptacle prepared as the stomach is, and so formed and placed as it is, to receive and digest necessary nutriment?

Had not the whole frame of man beside been in vain? Or what if the passage from it downward had not been made somewhat a little ascending, so as to detain a convenient time what it

received, but that what was taken in were suddenly transmitted? It is evident the whole structure had been ruined as soon as made. What, (to instance in what seems so small a matter,) if that little cover had been wanting at the entrance of that through which we breathe; (the depression whereof by the weight of what we eat or drink, shuts it, and prevents meat and drink from going down that way;) had not unavoidable suffocation ensued? And who can number the instances that can be given

beside? Now when there is a concurrence of so many things absolutely necessary, (concerning which the common saying is as applicable, more frequently wont to be applied to matters of morality, - 'Goodness is from the concurrence of all causes, evil, from any defect,') each so aptly and opportunely serving its own proper use, and all, one common end, certainly to say that so manifold, so regular and stated a subservience to that end, and the end itself, were undesigned, and things

casually fell out thus, is to say we know or care not what.

"We will only, before we close this consideration, concerning the mere frame of a human body, (which hath been so hastily and superficially proposed,) offer a supposition which is no more strange (excluding the vulgar notion by which nothing is strange, but what is not common) than the thing itself as it actually is; namely, that the whole more external covering of the body of a man were made, instead of skin and

flesh, of some very transparent substance, flexible, but clear as very crystal; through which, and the other more inward (and as transparent) integuments, or enfolding, we could plainly perceive the situation and order of all the internal parts, and how they each of them perform their distinct offices: if we could discern the continual motion of the blood, how it is conveyed, by its proper conduits, from its first source and fountain, partly downward to the lower entrails, (if rather it ascend not from

thence, as at least what afterward becomes blood doth,) partly upward, to its admirable elaboratory, the heart; where it is refined and furnished with fresh vital spirits, and so transmitted thence by the distinct vessels, prepared for this purpose: could we perceive the curious contrivance of those little doors, by which it is let in and out, on this side and on that; the order and course of its circulation, its most commodious distribution by two social channels or conduit pipes, that everywhere accompany one

another throughout the body: could we discern the curious artifice of the brain, its ways of purgation; and were it possible to pry into the secret chambers and receptacles of the less or more pure spirits there; perceive their manifold conveyances, and the rare texture of that net, commonly called the wonderful one: could we behold the veins, arteries, and nerves, all of them arising from their proper and distinct originals; and their orderly dispersion for the most part by pairs, and

conjugations, on this side and that, from the middle of the back; with the curiously wrought branches, which, supposing these to appear duly diversified, as so many more duskish strokes in this transparent frame they would be found to make throughout the whole of it; were every smaller fiber thus made at once discernible, especially those innumerable threads into which the spinal marrow is distributed at the bottom of the back: and could we, through the same medium, perceive those

numerous little machines made to serve unto voluntary motions, (which in the whole body are computed, by some, to the number of four hundred and thirty, or thereabouts, or so many of them as| according to the present supposition, could possibly come in view,) and discern their composition, their various and elegant figures-round, square, long, triangular, &c, and behold them do their offices, and sec how they ply to and fro, and work in their respective places, as any motion is to be

performed by them: were all these things, I say, thus made liable to an easy and distinct view, who would not admiringly cry out, How fearfully and wonderfully am I made? And sure there is no man sober, who would not, upon such a sight, pronounce that man mad, that should suppose such a production to have been a mere undesigned casualty. At least, if there be any thing in the world that may Be thought to carry sufficiently convincing evidences in it, of its having' been made

industriously, and on purpose, not by chance, would not miscomposition, thus offered to view, be esteemed to do so much more? Yea, and if it did only bear upon it characters equally evidential, of wisdom and design, with what doth certainly so, though in the lowest degree, it were sufficient to evince our present purpose. For if one such instance as this would bring the matter no higher than to a bare equality, that would at least argue a maker of man's body, as wise, and as properly

designing as the artificer of any such slighter piece of workmanship, that may yet, certainly, be concluded the effect of skill and design. And then, enough might be said, from other instances, to manifest him unspeakably superior. And that the matter would be brought, at least, to an equality upon the supposition now made, there can be no doubt, if anyone be judge that hath not abjured his understanding and his eyes together. And what then, if we lay aside that supposition, (which only

somewhat gratifies fancy and imagination,) doth that alter the case? Or is there the less of wisdom and contrivance expressed in this work of forming man's body, only for that it is not so easily and suddenly obvious to our sight? Then we might with the same reason say, concerning some curious piece of carved work that is thought fit to be kept locked up in a cabinet, when we see it, that there was admirable workmanship shown in doing it; but as soon as it is again shut up in its repository, that there was

none at all. Inasmuch as we speak of the objective characters of wisdom and design, that are in the thing itself (though they must some way or other come under our notice, otherwise we can be capable of arguing nothing from them, yet,) since we have sufficient assurance that there really are such characters in the structure of the body of man as have been mentioned, and a thousand more than have been thought necessary to be mentioned here; it is plain that the greater or less facility of finding them

out, so that we be at a certainty that they are, (whether by the slower, or more gradual search of our own eyes, or by relying upon the testimony of such as have purchased themselves that satisfaction by their own labor and diligence,) is merely accidental to the thing itself we are discoursing of; and neither adds to, nor detracts from the rational evidence of the present argument. Or if it do either, the more abstruse paths of Divine wisdom in this, as in other things, do rather

recommend it the more to our adoration and reverence, than if everything were obvious, and lay open to the first glance of a more careless eye. The things which we are sure (or may be, if we do not shut our eyes) the wise Maker of this world hath done, do sufficiently serve to assure us, that he could have done this also; that is, have made everything in the frame and shape of our bodies conspicuous in the way but now supposed, if he had thought it fit. He hath done greater things. And since

he hath not thought that fit, we may be bold to say, the doing of it would signify more trifling, and less design. It gives us a more amiable and comely representation of the Being we are treating of, that his works are less for ostentation than use; and that his wisdom and other attributes appear in them rather to the instruction of sober, than the gratification of vain minds.

"We may therefore confidently conclude, that the figuration of the human body carries with it as

manifest, unquestionable evidences of design, as any piece of human artifice, that most confessedly, in the judgment of any man, doth so; and therefore had as certainly a designing cause. We may challenge the world to show a disparity, unless it be that the advantage is inconceivably great on our side. For would not any one that hath not abandoned both his reason and his modesty, be ashamed to confess and admire the skill that is shown in making a statue, or the picture of a man, that (as

one ingeniously says) is but the shadow of his skin, and deny the wisdom that appears in the composure of his body itself, that contains so numerous and so various engines and instruments for sundry purposes in it, as that it is become an art, and a very laudable one, but to discover and find out the art and skill that are shown in the contrivance and formation of them?

"And now if any should be so incurably blind as not to perceive, or so perversely willful as not to

acknowledge, an appearance of wisdom in the frame and figuration of the body of an animal (peculiarly of man) more then equal to what appears in any the most exquisite piece of human artifice, and which no wit of man can ever fully imitate; although, as hath been said, an acknowledged equality would suffice to evince a wise Maker thereof, yet because it is the existence of God we are now speaking of, and that it is therefore not enough to evince, but to magnify the wisdom we would ascribe

to him; we shall pass from the parts and frame to the consideration of the more principal powers and functions of terrestrial creatures; ascending from such as agree to the less perfect order of these, to those of the more perfect, namely, of man himself. And surely to have been the author of faculties that shall enable to such functions, will evidence a wisdom that defies our imitation, and will dismay the attempts of it.

"We begin with that of growth. Many sorts of rare

engines we acknowledge contrived by the wit of man, but who hath ever made one that could grow, or that had in it a self-improving power? A tree, an herb, a pile of grass, may upon this account challenge all the world to make such a thing; that is, to implant the power of growing into anything to which it doth not natively belong, or to make a thing to which it doth.

"By what art would they make a seed? And which way would they inspire it with a seminal form? And

they that think this whole globe of the earth was compacted by the casual (or fatal) coalition of particles of matter, by what magic would they conjure up so many to come together as to make one clod? We vainly hunt with a lingering mind after miracles; if we did not more vainly mean by them nothing else but novelties, we are compassed about with such: and the greatest miracle is, that we see them not. You with whom the daily productions of nature (as you call it) are so cheap, see if you can do the like.

Try your skill upon a rose. Yea, but you must have pre-existent matter? But can you ever prove the Maker of the world had so, or even defend the possibility of uncreated matter? And suppose they had the free grant of all the matter between the crown of their head and the moon, could they tell what to do with it, or how to manage it, so as to make it yield them one single flower, that they might glory in as their own production?

"And what mortal man, that hath reason enough about him to be serious, and to think awhile, would not even be amazed at the miracle of nutrition? Or that there are things in the world capable of nourishment? Or who would attempt an imitation here, or not despair to per. form anything like it? That is, to make any nourishable thing. Are we not here infinitely outdone? Do we not see ourselves compassed about with wonders, and are we not ourselves such, in that we see, and are creatures,

from all whose parts there is a continual defluxion, and yet that receive a constant gradual supply and renovation, by which they are continued in the same state? as the bush burning but not consumed. It is easy to give an artificial frame to a thing that shall gradually decay and waste till it be quite gone, and disappear. You could raise a structure of snow that would soon do that. But can your manual skill compose a thing that, like our bodies, shall be continually melting away, and be continually

repaired, through so long a tract of time?

Nay, but can you tell how it is done? You know in what method, and by what instruments, food is received, concocted, separated, and so much as must serve for nourishment turned into chyle, and that into blood, first grosser, and then more refined, and that distributed into all parts for this purpose. Yea, and what then? Therefore are you as wise as your Maker? Could you have made such a thing as the stomach, a

liver, a heart, a vein, an artery? Or are you so very sure what the digestive quality is? Or if you are, and know what things best serve to maintain, to repair, or strengthen it, who implanted that quality? Both where it is so immediately useful, or in the other things you would use for the service of that? Or how, if such things had not been prepared to your hand, would you have devised to persuade the particles of matter into so useful and happy a conjuncture, as that such a quality might result? Or (to

speak more suitably to the most) how, if you had not been shown the way, would you have thought it were to be done, or which way would you have gone to work, to turn meat and drink into flesh and blood?

"And what shall we say of spontaneous motion, wherewith we find also creatures endowed that are so mean and despicable in our eyes, (as well as ourselves,) that is, that so silly a thing as a fly, a gnat, &c, should have a power in it to move itself, or stop its own motion, at its own

pleasure? How far have all attempted imitations in this kind fallen short of this perfection! And how much more excellent a thing is the smallest and most contemptible insect, than the most admired machine we ever heard or read of; (as Architas Tarentinus's dove so anciently celebrated, or more lately Regiomontanus's fly, or his eagle, or any the like;) not only as having this peculiar power, above anything of this sort, but as having the sundry other powers beside, meeting in it,

whereof these are wholly destitute?

"And should we go on to instance farther in the several powers of sensation, both external and internal, the various instincts, appetitions, passions, sympathies, antipathies, the powers of memory, (and we might add of speech,) that we find the inferior orders of creatures either generally furnished with, or some of them, as to this last, disposed unto; how should we even overdo the present business; and too

needlessly insult over human wit, (which we must suppose to have already yielded the cause,) in challenging it to produce and offer to view a hearing, seeing engine, that can imagine, talk, is capable of hunger, thirst, of desire, anger, fear, grief, &c, as its own creature, concerning which it may glory and say, I have done this!

"Is it so admirable a performance, and so ungainsayable an evidence of skill and wisdom, with much labor and long travail of mind; a busy, restless

agitation of working thoughts; the often renewal of frustrated attempts; the varying of defeated trials, this way and that, at length to hit upon, and by much pains, and with a slow, gradual progress, by the use of who can tell how many sundry sorts of instruments or tools, by long hewing, hammering, turning, filing, to compose one only single machine of such a frame and structure as that by the frequent reinforcement of a skilful hand, it may be capable of some (and that other-wise but a very short-lived)

motion? And is it no argument, or effect of wisdom, so easily and certainly, without labor, error, or disappointment, to frame both so infinite a variety of kinds, and so innumerable individuals of every such kind of living creatures, that not only with the greatest facility can move themselves with so many sorts of motion downward, upward, to and fro, this way or that, with a progressive or circular, a swifter or a slower motion, at their own pleasure; but can also grow, propagate, see, hear, desire, joy, &c? Is

this no work of wisdom, but only either blind fate or chance? Of how strangely perverse and odd a complexion is that understanding, (if yet it may be called an understanding,) that can make this judgment?

"But because whatsoever comes under the name of cogitation, properly taken, is assigned to some higher cause than mechanism; and that there are operations belonging to man, which lay claim to a reason, able soul, as the immediate principle and

author of them, we have yet this farther step to advance, that is, to consider the most apparent evidence we have of a wise, designing agent, in the powers and nature of this more excellent, and, among other things, more obvious to our notice, the noblest of his productions.

"And were it not for the slothful neglect of the most to study themselves, we should not have need to recount unto men the common and well-known abilities and excellencies which peculiarly belong to

their own nature. They might take notice, without being told, that first, as to their intellectual faculty, they have somewhat about them that can think, understand, frame notions of things; that can rectify or supply the false or defective representations which are made to them by their external senses and fancies; that can conceive of things far above the reach and sphere of sense, the moral good or evil of actions or inclinations, and what there is in them of rectitude or pravity; whereby they can

animadvert, and cast their eye inward upon themselves; observe the good or evil acts or inclinations, the knowledge, ignorance, dullness, vigor, tranquility, trouble, and generally, the perfections or imperfections of their own minds; that can apprehend the general natures of things, the future existence of what yet is not, with the future appearance of that which, to us, as yet, appears not.

"They may take notice of their power of comparing

things, of discerning and making a judgment of their agreements and disagreements; their proportions and dispositions to one another; of affirming or denying this or that, concerning such or such things; and of pronouncing, with more or less confidence, concerning the truth or falsehood of such affirmations or negations.

"And moreover, of their power of arguing, and inferring one thing from another, so as from one

plain and evident principle to draw forth a long chain of consequences, that may be discerned to be linked therewith.

"They have withal to consider the liberty and the large capacity of the human will, which, when it is itself, rejects the dominion of any other than the supreme Lord's, and refuses satisfaction in any other than the supreme and most comprehensive good.

"And upon even so hasty and transient a view of a thing furnished with such powers and faculties, we

have sufficient occasion to bethink ourselves, How came such a thing as this into being; whence did it spring, or to what original doth it owe itself? More particularly we have here two things to be remembered-That, notwithstanding so high excellencies, the soul of man doth yet appear to be a caused being, that some time had a beginning-That by them it is sufficiently evident, that it owes itself to a wise and intelligent cause."

The instance of a watch, chosen by Howe for the illustration of his argument, that evidences of design, in any production, are evidences of a designing cause; is thus strikingly amplified and applied by Paley to refute the leading Atheistic theories:- "The mechanism of the watch being once observed and understood, the inference, we think, is inevitable, that the watch must have had a maker; that there must have existed, at some time and at some place or other, an artificer or artificers who

formed it for the purpose which we find it actually to answer; who comprehended its construction and designed its use.

"Nor would it, I apprehend, weaken the conclusion, that we had never seen a watch made; that we had never known an artist capable of making one; that we were altogether incapable of executing such a piece of workmanship ourselves, or of understanding in what manner it was performed: all this being no more than

what is true of some exquisite remains of ancient art, of some lost arts, and, to the generality of mankind, of the more curious productions of modern manufacture. Does one man in a million know how oval frames are turned? Ignorance of this kind exalts our opinion of the unseen and unknown artist's skill, if he be unseen and unknown, but raises no doubt in our minds of the existence and agency of such an artist, at some former time, and in some place or other. Nor can I perceive that it varies at all

the inference, whether the question arise concerning a human agent, or concerning an agent of a different species, or an agent possessing, in some respects, a different nature.

"Neither, secondly, would it invalidate our conclusion, that the watch sometimes went wrong, or that it seldom went exactly right. The purpose of the machinery, the design, and the designer, might be evident, and in the case supposed would be evident, in whatever way we accounted for the

irregularity of the movement, or whether we could account for it or not. It is not necessary that a machine be perfect, in order to show with what design it was made: still less necessary, where the only question is, whether it were made with any design at all.

"Nor, thirdly, would it bring any uncertainty into the argument, if there were a few parts of the watch, concerning which we could not discover, or had not yet discovered in what manner they conduced to the

general effect; or even some parts concerning which we could not ascertain, whether they conduced to that effect in any manner whatever. For, as to the first branch of the case, if, by the loss or disorder, or decay of the parts in question, the movement of the watch were found in fact to be stopped, or disturbed, or retarded, no doubt would remain in our minds as to the utility or intention of these parts, although we should be unable to investigate the manner according to which or the

connection by which, the ultimate effect depended upon their action or assistance; and the more complex is the machine, the more likely is this obscurity to arise. Then, as to the second thing supposed, namely, that there were parts which might be spared without prejudice to the movement of the watch, and that we had proved this by experiment, - these superfluous parts, even if we were completely assured that they were such, would not vacate the reasoning which we had

instituted concerning other parts. The indication of contrivance remained, with respect to them, nearly as it was before.

"Nor, fourthly, would any man in his senses think the existence of the watch, with its various machinery, accounted for by being told that it Was one out of possible combinations of material forms; that whatever he had found, in the place where he had found the watch, must have contained some internal configuration or other; and that this configuration

might be the structure now exhibited, namely, of the works of a watch, as well as a different structure.

"Nor, fifthly, would it yield his inquiry more satisfaction to be answered, that there existed in things a principle of order, which had disposed the parts of the watch into their present form and situation. He never knew a watch made by the principle of order; nor can he even form to him-self an idea of what is meant by a principle of order, distinct from the

intelligence of the watchmaker.

"Sixthly, he would be surprised to hear, that the mechanism of the watch was no proof of contrivance, only a motive to induce the mind to think so*

"And not less surprised to be informed, that the watch in his hand was nothing more than the result of the laws of metallic nature. It is a perversion of language to assign any law, as the efficient, operative cause of anything. A law presupposes an agent; for

it is only the mode according to which an agent proceeds: it implies a power; for it is the order according to which that power acts. Without this agent, without this power, which are both distinct from itself, the law does nothing, - is nothing. The expression 'the law of metallic nature,' may sound strange and harsh to a philosophic ear, but it seems quite as justifiable as some others which are more familiar to him, such as the law of vegetable nature,' 'the law of animal nature,' or indeed as 'the

law of nature' in general, when assigned as the cause of phenomena, in exclusion of agency and power; or when it is substituted into the place of these.

"Neither, lastly, would our observer be driven out of his conclusion, or from his confidence in its truth, by being told that he knew nothing at all about the matter. He knows enough for his argument; he knows the utility of the end; he knows the subservience and adaptation of the means to the end. These points being known, his

ignorance of other points, his doubts concerning other points, affect not the certainty of his reasoning. The consciousness of knowing little need not beget a distrust of that which he does know.

"Suppose, in the next place, that the person who found the watch should, after some time, discover that, in addition to all the properties which he had hitherto observed in it, it possessed the unexpected property of producing, in the course of its movement, another watch like itself;

(the thing is conceivable;) that it contained within it a mechanism, a system of parts, a mould, for instance, or a complex adjustment of lathes, files, and other tools, evidently and separately calculated for this purpose; let us inquire what effect ought such a discovery to have upon his former conclusion.

"The first effect would be to increase his admiration of the contrivance, and his conviction of the consummate skill of the contriver. Whether he

regarded the object of the contrivance, the distinct apparatus, the intricate, yet in many parts intelligible, mechanism, by which it was carried on, he would perceive in this new observation, nothing but an additional reason for doing what he had already done; for referring the construction of the watch to design and to supreme art. If that construction without this property, or, which is the same thing, before this property had been noticed, proved intention and art to have been employed about it;

still more strong would the proof appear, when he came to the knowledge of this farther property, the crown and perfection of all the rest.

"He would reflect, that though the watch before him were, in some sense, the maker of the watch which was fabricated in the course of its movements, yet it was in a very different sense from that in which a carpenter, for instance, is the maker of a chair; the author of its contrivance, the cause of the relation of its parts to their use. With

respect to these, the first watch was no cause at all to the second; in no such sense as this was it the author of the constitution and order, either of the parts which the new watch contained, or of the parts by the aid and instrumentality of which it was produced. We might possibly say, but with great latitude of expression, that a stream of water ground corn: but no latitude of expression would allow us to say, no stretch of conjecture could lead us to think, that the stream of water built the mill, though

it were too ancient for us to know who the builder was. What the stream of water does in the affair is neither more nor less than this: by the application of an unintelligent impulse to a mechanism previously arranged, arranged independently of it, and arranged by intelligence, an effect is produced, namely, the corn is ground. But the effect results from the arrangement. The force of the stream cannot be said to be the cause or author of the effect, still less of the arrangement. Understanding and plan in

the formation of the mill were not the less necessary, for any share which the water has in grinding the corn: yet is this share the same as that which the watch would have contributed to the production of the new watch, upon the supposition assumed in the last section. Therefore,

"Though it be now no longer probable, that the individual watch which our observer had found, was made immediately by the hand of an artificer, yet doth not this alteration in

any wise affect the inference, that an artificer had been originally employed and concerned in the production.

The argument from design remains as it was. Marks of design and contrivance are no more accounted for now than they were before. In the same thing, we may ask for the cause of different properties. We may ask for the cause of the color of a body, of its hardness, of its heat; and these causes may be all different. We are now asking for the cause of that subservience to a use, that

relation to an end which we have marked in the watch before us. No answer is given to this question by telling us that a preceding watch produced it. There cannot be design without a designer; contrivance without a contriver; order without choice; arrangement without any thing capable of arranging; subservience and relation to a purpose, without that which could intend a purpose; means suitable to an end, and executing their office in accomplishing that end, without the end ever having been contemplated,

or the means accommodated to it. Arrangement, disposition of parts, subservience of means to an end, relation of instruments to a use, imply the presence of intelligence and mind. No one, therefore, can rationally believe, that the insensible, inanimate watch, from which the watch before us issued, was the proper cause of the mechanism we so much admire in it; could be truly said to have constructed the instrument, disposed its parts, assigned their office, determined their

order, action, and mutual dependency, combined their several motions into one result, and that also a result connected with the utilities of other beings. All these properties, therefore, are as much unaccounted for as they were before. "Nor is anything gained by running the difficulty farther back, that is, by supposing the watch before us to have been produced from another watch, that from a former, and so on indefinitely. Our going back ever so far brings us no nearer to the least

degree of satisfaction upon the subject.

Contrivance is still unaccounted for. We still want a contriver. A designing mind is neither supplied by this supposition, nor dispensed with. If the difficulty were diminished the farther we went back, by going back indefinitely we might exhaust it. And this, is the only case to which this sort of reasoning applies. Where there is a tendency, or, as we increase the number of terms, a continual approach toward

a limit, there, by supposing the number of terms to be what is called infinite, we may conceive the limit to be attained: but where there is no such tendency or approach, nothing is effected by lengthening the series. There is no difference as to the point in question, (whatever there may be as to many points,) between one series and another; between a series which is finite, and a series which is infinite. A chain composed of an infinite number of links, can no more support itself, than a chain composed of a finite

number of links. And of this we are assured, (though we never can have tried the experiment,) because, by increasing the number of links, from ten, for instance, to a hundred, from a hundred to a thousand, &c, we make not the smallest approach, we observe not the smallest tendency toward self-support. There is no difference in this respect (yet there may be a great difference in several respects) between a chain of a greater or less length, between one chain and another, between one that

is finite and one that is infinite. This very much resembles the case before us. The machine, which we are inspecting, demonstrates, by its construction, contrivance and design. Contrivance must have had a contriver; design a designer, whether the machine immediately proceeded from another machine or not. That circumstance alters not the case. That other machine may, in like manner, have proceeded from a former machine: nor does that alter the case: contrivance must have had a contriver.

That former one from one preceding it: no alteration still: a contriver is still necessary.

No tendency is perceived, no approach toward a diminution of this necessity. It is the same with any and every succession of these machines; a sue-cession of ten, of a hundred, of a thousand; with one series as with another; a series which is finite as with a series which is infinite. In whatever other respects they may differ, in this they do not. In all equally,

contrivance and design are unaccounted for.

"The question is not simply, how came the first watch into existence? Which question, it may be pretended, is done away by supposing the series of watches thus produced from one another to have been infinite, and consequently to have had no such first, for which it was necessary to provide a cause. This perhaps would have been nearly the state of the question, if nothing had been before us but an unorganized,

unmechanized substance, without mark or indication of contrivance. It might be difficult to show that such substance could not have existed from eternity, either in succession, (if it were possible, which I think it is not, for unorganized bodies to spring from one another,) or by individual perpetuity. But that is not the question now. To suppose it to be so, is to suppose that it made no difference whether we had found a watch or a stone. As it is, the metaphysics of that question have no place; for

in the watch which we are examining, are seen contrivance, design; an end, a purpose; means for the end, adaptation to the purpose. And the question, which irresistibly presses upon our thoughts, is, whence this contrivance and design? The thing required is the intending mind, the adapting hand, the intelligence by which that hand was directed. This question, this demand, is not shaken off, by increasing a number or succession of substances, destitute of these properties; nor the more by

increasing that number to infinity. If it be said, that, upon the supposition of one watch being produced from another in the course of that other's movements, and by means of the mechanism within it, we have a cause for the watch in my hand, viz. the watch from which it proceeded, I deny, that for the design, the contrivance, the suitableness of means to an end, the adaptation of instruments to a use, (all which we discover in the watch,) we have any cause whatever. It is in vain, therefore, to assign a series

of such causes, or to allege that a series may be carried back to infinity; for I do not admit that we have yet any cause at all of the phenomena, still less any series of causes either finite or infinite. Here is contrivance, but no contriver; proofs of design, but no designer.

"Our observer would farther also reflect, that the maker of the watch before him was, in truth and reality, the maker of every watch produced from it; there being no difference (except that the latter

manifests a more exquisite skill) between the making of another watch with his own hands, by the mediation of files, lathes, chisels, &c, and the disposing, fixing, and inserting of these instruments, or of others equivalent to them, in the body of the watch already made, in such a manner, as to form a new watch in the course of the movements which he had given to the old one. It is only working by one set of tools instead of another.

"The conclusion which the first examination of the watch, of its works, construction and movement, suggested, was, that it must have had, for the cause and author of that construction, an artificer, who understood its mechanism, and designed its use. This conclusion is invincible.

A second examination presents us with a new discovery. The watch is found, in the course of its movement, to produce another watch, similar to itself: and not only so, but

we perceive in it a system of organization, separately calculated for that purpose. What effect would this discovery have, or ought it to have, upon our former inference? What, as hath already been said, but to increase, beyond measure, our admiration of the skill, which had been employed in the formation of such a machine? Or shall it, instead of this, all at once turn us round to an opposite conclusion, viz. that no art or skill whatever has been concerned in the business, although all other evidences of art and skill

remain as they were, and this last and supreme piece of art be now added to the rest 1 Can this be maintained without absurdity? Yet this is Atheism."

If the argument is so powerful, when a work of art merely is made its basis; it is rendered much more convincing when it is transferred to the works of nature; because ends more singular are, in an infinite number of instances, there proposed, and are accomplished by contrivances much more

curious and difficult. In the quotation above given from Howe, the eye, the parts of the body which are double, and the construction of the spine, are adduced among others as striking"

in-stances of a contrivance superior to the art of man, and as evidently denoting forethought and plan, the attributes not of intelligence only, but of an intelligence of an infinitely superior order.

These instances have been admirably wrought up by the master hand which

furnished the last quotation.

We begin with the human eye.

"The contrivances of nature surpass the contrivances of art, in the complexity, subtlety, and curiosity of the mechanism; and still more, if possible, do they go beyond them in number and variety; yet in a multitude of cases, are not less evidently mechanical, not less evidently contrivances, not less evidently accommodated to their end, or suited to their office, than are the most

perfect productions of human ingenuity.

"I know no better method of introducing so large a subject, than that of comparing a single thing with a single thing; an eye, for example, with a telescope. As far as the examination of the instrument goes, there is precisely the same proof that the eye was made for vision, as there is that the telescope was made for assisting it. They are made upon the same principles; both being adjusted to the laws by which the

transmission and refraction of rays of light are regulated. I speak not of the origin of the laws themselves; but such laws being fixed, the construction, in both cases, is adapted to them. For instance; these laws require, in order to produce the same effect, that the rays of light, in passing from water into the eye, should be refracted by a more convex surface than when it passes out of air into the eye. Accordingly we find, that the eye of a fish, in that part of it called the crystalline lens, is

much rounder than the eye of terrestrial animals. What plainer manifestation of design can there be than this difference? What could a mathematical instrument maker have done more, to show his knowledge of his principle, his application of that knowledge, his suiting of his means to his end; I will not say, to display the compass or excellency of his skill and art, for in these all comparison is indecorous, but to testify counsel, choice, consideration, purpose?

"To some it may appear a difference sufficient to destroy all similitude between the eye and the telescope, that the one is a perceiving organ, the other an unperceiving instrument. The fact is, that they are both instruments. And, as to the mechanism, at least as to mechanism being employed, and even as to the kind of it, this circumstance varies not the analogy at all: for observe, what the constitution of the eye is. It is necessary, in order to produce distinct vision, that an image or

picture of the object be formed at the bottom of the eye. Whence this necessity arises, or how the picture is connected with the sensation, or contributes to it, it may be difficult, nay, we will confess, if you please, impossible for us to search out. But the present question is not concerned in the inquiry. It may be true, that, in this, and in other instances, we trace mechanical contrivance a certain way; and that then we come to something which is not mechanical, or which is inscrutable. But this affects not the

certainty of our investigation, as far as we have gone. The difference between an animal and an automatic statue, consists in this, -

that in the animal, we trace the mechanism to a certain point, and then we are stopped; either the mechanism becoming too subtitle for our discernment, or something else beside the known laws of mechanism taking place; whereas, in the automaton, for the comparatively few motions of which it is capable, we trace the

mechanism throughout. But, up to the limit, the reasoning is as clear and certain in the one case as the other. In the example before us, it is a matter of certainty, because it is a matter which experience and observation demonstrate, that the formation of an image at the bottom of the eye is necessary to perfect vision. The image itself can be shown.

Whatever affects the distinctness of the image, affects the distinctness of the vision. The formation

then of such an image being necessary (no matter how) to the sense of sight, and to the exercise of that sense, the apparatus by which it is formed is constructed and put together, not only with infinitely more art, but upon the self-same principles of art, as in the telescope or camera obscura. The perception arising from the image may be laid out of the question; for the production of the image, these are instruments of the same kind. The end is the same; the means are the same.

The purpose in both is alike; the contrivance for accomplishing that purpose is in both alike. The lenses of the telescope, and the humors of the eye, bear a complete resemblance to one another, in their figure, their position, and in their power over the rays of light, viz. in bringing each pencil to a point at the right distance from the lens; namely, in the eye, at the exact place where the membrane is spread to receive it. How is it possible, under circumstances of such close

affinity, and under the operation of an equal evidence, to exclude contrivance from the one; yet to acknowledge the proof of contrivance having been employed, as the plainest and clearest of all proposition in the other?

"The resemblance between the two cases is still more accurate, and obtains in more points than we have yet represented, or than we are, on the first view of the subject, aware of. In dioptric telescopes there is an imperfection of this nature. Pencils of light, in

passing through glass lenses, are separated into different colors, thereby tingeing the object, especially the edges of it, as if it were viewed through a prism. To correct this inconvenience had been long a desideratum in the art. At last it came into the mind of a sagacious optician, to inquire how this matter was managed in the eye; in which there was exactly the same difficulty to contend with as in the telescope. His observation taught him, that, in the eye, the evil was cured by combining together lenses

composed of different substances, i. e. of substances which possessed different refracting powers. Our artist borrowed from thence his hint; and produced a correction of the defect by imitating, 'in glasses made from different materials, the effects of the different humors through which the rays of light pass before they reach the bottom of the eye. Could this be in the eye without purpose, which suggested to the optician the only effectual means of attaining that purpose?

"But farther; there are other points, not so much perhaps of strict resemblance between the two, as of superiority of the eye over the telescope; yet of a superiority, which, being founded in the laws that regulate both, may furnish topics of fair and just comparison. Two things were wanted to the eye, which were not wanted, at least in the same degree, to the telescope; and these were, the adaptation of the organ, first, to different degrees of light; and secondly, to the vast diversity of distance at

which objects are viewed by the naked eye, viz. from a few inches to as many miles. These difficulties present not themselves to the maker of the telescope. He wants all the light he can get; and he never directs his instrument to objects near at hand. In the eye, both these cases were to be provided for; and for the purpose of providing for them a subtitle and appropriate mechanism is introduced.

"In order to exclude excess of light, when it is excessive, and to render

objects visible under obscurer degrees of it, when no more can be had, the hole or aperture in the eye, through which the light enters, is so formed, as to contract or dilate itself for the purpose of admitting a greater or less number of rays at the same time. The chamber of the eye is a camera obscura, which, when the light is too small, can enlarge its opening; when too strong, can again contract it; and that without any other assistance than that of its own exquisite machinery. It is farther also, in the

human subject, to be observed, that this hole in the eye, which we call the pupil, under all its different dimensions, retains its exact circular shape. This is a structure extremely artificial. Let an artist only try to execute the same. He will find that his threads and strings must be disposed with great consideration and contrivance, to make a circle, which shall continually change its diameter, yet preserve its form. This is done in the eye by an application of fibers, i. e. of strings,

similar, in their position and action, to what an artist would and must employ, if he had the same piece of workmanship to perform.

"The second difficulty which has been stated, was the suiting of the same organ to the perception of objects that lie near at hand, within a few inches, we will suppose, of the eye, and of objects which were placed at a considerable distance from it, that, for example, of as many furlongs: (I speak in both cases of the distance at

which distinct vision can be exercised.) Now this, according to the principles of optics, that is, according to the laws by which the transmission of light is regulated (and these laws are fixed,) could not be done without the organ itself undergoing an alteration, and receiving an adjustment that might correspond with the exigency of the case, that is to say, with the different inclination to one another under which the rays of light reached it. Rays issuing from points placed at a small distance from the

eye, and which consequently must enter the eye in a spreading or diverging order, cannot, by the same optical instrument in the same state, be brought to a point, i. e. be made to form an image, in the same place with rays proceeding from objects situated at a much greater distance, and which rays arrive at the eye in directions nearly, and physically speaking, parallel. It requires a rounder lens to do it. The point of concourse behind the lens must fall critically upon the retina, or the

vision is confused; yet, other things remaining the same, this point, by the immutable properties of light, is carried farther back, when the rays proceed from a near object, than when they are sent from one that is remote. A person who was using an optical instrument, would manage this matter by changing, as the occasion required, his lens or his telescope; or by adjusting the distances of his glasses with his hand or his screw: but how is it to be managed in the eye? What the alteration was, or in what

part of the eye it took place, or by what means it was effected, (for, if the known laws which govern the refraction of light be maintained, some alteration in the state of the organ there must be,) had long formed a subject of inquiry and conjecture. The change, though sufficient for the purpose, is so minute as to elude ordinary observation. Some very late discoveries, deduced from a laborious and most accurate inspection of the structure and operation of the organ, seem at length to have ascertained the

mechanical alteration which the parts of the eye undergo. It is found, that by the action of certain muscles, called the straight muscles, and which action is the most advantageous that could be imagined for the purpose, - it is found, I say, that, whenever the eye is directed to a near object, three changes are produced in it at the same time, all severally contributing to the adjustment required. The cornea, or outermost coat of the eye, is rendered more round and prominent; the crystalline lens underneath is pushed

forward; and the axis of vision, as the depth of the eye is called, is elongated. These changes in the eye vary its power over the rays of light in such a manner and degree as to produce exactly the effect which is wanted, viz. the formation of an image upon the retina, whether the rays come to the eye in a state of divergence, which is the case when the object is near to the eye, or come parallel to one another, which is the case when the object is placed at a distance. Can anything be more decisive of

contrivance than this is? The most secret laws of optics must have been known to the author of a structure endowed with such a capacity of change. It is, as though an optician, when he had a nearer object to view, should rectify his instrument by putting in another glass, at the same time drawing out also his tube to a different length.

"In considering vision as achieved by the means of an image formed at the bottom of the eye, we can never reflect without

wonder upon the smallness, yet correctness, of the picture, the subtlety of the touch, the fineness of the lines. A landscape of five or six square leagues is brought into a space of half an inch diameter; yet the multitude of objects which it contains are all preserved; are all discriminated in their magnitudes, positions, figures, colors. The prospect from Hampstead hill is compressed into the compass of a sixpence, yet circumstantially represented. A stage coach traveling at its ordinary

speed for half an hour, passes in the eye, only over one twelfth of an inch, yet is this change of place in the image distinctly perceived throughout its whole progress; for it is only by means of that perception that the motion of the coach itself is made sensible to the eye. If anything can abate our admiration of the smallness of the visual tablet compared with the extent of vision, it is a reflection which the view of nature leads us, every hour, to make, viz. that in the

hands of the Creator, great and little are nothing."

On the parts of the body which are double, adduced by Howe, as proofs of contrivance, our author farther remarks:-

"The human, or indeed the animal frame, considered as a mass or assemblage, exhibits in its composition three properties, which have long struck my mind, as indubitable evidences, not only of design, but of a great deal of attention and accuracy in prosecuting the design.

"The first is, the exact correspondence of the two sides of the same animal: the right hand answering to the left, leg to leg, eye to eye, one side of the countenance to the other; and with a precision, to imitate which, in any tolerable degree, forms one of the difficulties of statuary, and requires, on the part of the artist, a constant attention to this property of his work, distinct from every other.

"It is the most difficult thing that can be, to get a wig made even; yet how

seldom is the face awry? And what care is taken that it should not be so, the anatomy of its bones demonstrates.

The upper part of the face is composed of thirteen bones, six on each side, answering each to each, and the thirteenth without a fellow, in the middle; the lower part of the face is in like manner composed of six bones, three on each side, respectively corresponding, and the lower jaw in the center. In building an arch, could

more be done in order to make the curve true, i. e.

the parts equidistant from the middle, alike in figure and position?

"The exact resemblance of the eyes, considering how compounded this organ is in its structure, how various and how delicate are the shades of color with which its iris is tinged, how differently, as to effect upon appearance, the eye may be mounted in its socket, and how differently in different heads eyes actually are set, is a property of animal bodies

much to be admired. Of ten thousand eyes, I don't know that it would be possible to match one, except with its own fellow; or to distribute them into suitable pairs by any other selection than that which obtains.

"The next circumstance to be remarked is, that while the cavities of the body are so configured, as, externally, to exhibit the most exact correspondence of the opposite sides, the contents of these cavities have no such correspondence. A line

drawn down the middle of the breast divides the thorax into two sides exactly similar; yet these two sides enclose very different contents. The heart lies on the left side; a lobe of the lungs on the right; balancing each other, neither in size nor shape. The same thing holds of the abdomen. The liver lies on the right side, without any similar viscous opposed to it on the left. The spleen indeed is situated over against the liver; but agreeing with the liver neither in bulk nor form. There is no equipollency

between these. The stomach is a vessel, both irregular in its shape, and oblique in its position. The folding and doublings of the intestines do not present a parity of sides. Yet that symmetry, which depends upon the correlation of the sides, is externally preserved throughout the whole trunk; and is the more remarkable in the lower parts of it, as the integuments are soft; and the shape, consequently, is not, as the thorax is by its ribs, reduced by natural stays. It is evident,

therefore, that the external proportion does not arise from any equality in the shape or pressure of the internal contents. What is it indeed but a correction of inequalities? An adjustment, by mutual compensation, of anomalous forms into a regular congeries? the effect, in a word, of artful, and, if we might be permitted so to speak, of studied collocation?

"Similar also to this is the third observation; that an internal inequity in the feeding vessels is so

managed, as to produce no inequality in parts which were intended to correspond. The right arm answers accurately to the left, both in size and shape; but the arterial branches, which supply the two arms, do not go off from their trunk, in a pair, in the same manner, at the same place, or at the same angle. Under which want of similitude, it is very difficult to conceive how the same quantity of blood should be pushed through each artery; yet the result is right; the two limbs which are nourished by them perceive no

difference of supply, no effects of excess or deficiency.

"Concerning the difference of manner, in which the subclavian and carotid arteries, upon the different sides of the body, separate themselves from the aorta, Cheselden seems to have thought, that the advantage which the left gain by going off at a much acuter angle than the right, is made up to the right by their going off together in one branch. It is very possible that this may be the compensating contrivance; and if it be so,

how curious, how hydrostatical!"

The construction of the spine, another of Howe's illustrations, is thus exemplified:-

"The spine or back bone is a chain of joints of very wonderful construction. Various, difficult, and almost inconsistent offices were to be executed by the same instrument. It was to be firm, yet flexible: now I know of no chain made by art, which is both these; for by firmness I mean, not only strength, but stability; firm, to support the erect

position of the body; flexible, to allow of the bending of the trunk in all degrees of curvature. It was farther also, which is another, and quite a distinct purpose from the rest, to become a pipe or conduit for the safe conveyance from the brain of the most important fluid of the animal frame, that, namely, upon which all voluntary motion depends, the spinal marrow; a substance, not only of the first necessity to action, if not to life, but of a nature so delicate and tender, so susceptible, and so

impatient of injury, as that any unusual pressure upon it, or any considerable obstruction of its course, is followed by paralysis or death. Now the spine was not only to furnish the main trunk for the passage of the medullar substance from the brain, but to give out, in the course of its progress, small pipes there from, which being afterward indefinitely subdivided, might, under the name of nerves, distribute this exquisite supply to every part of the body. The same spine was also to serve another use

not less wanted than the preceding, viz. to afford a fulcrum, stay, or basis, (or, more properly speaking, a series of these,) for the insertion of the muscles which are spread over the trunk of the body; in which trunk there are not, as in the limbs, cylindrical bones, to which they can be fastened: and, likewise, which is a similar use, to furnish a support for the ends of the ribs to rest upon.

"Bespeak of a workman a piece of mechanism which shall comprise all these

purposes, and let him set about to contrive it; let him try his skill upon it; let him feel the difficulty of accomplishing the task, before he be told how the same thing is effected in the animal frame.

Nothing will enable him to judge so well of the wisdom which has been employed; nothing will dispose him to think of it so truly. First, for the firmness, yet flexibility of the spine, it is composed of a great number of bones (in the human subject of twenty-four) joined to one another,

and compacted together by broad bases. The breadth of the bases upon which the parts severally rest, and the closeness of the junction, give to the chain its firmness and stability; the number of parts, and consequent frequency of joints, its flexibility. Which flexibility, we may also observe, varies in different parts of the chain; is least in the back, where strength more than flexure is wanted; greater in the loins, which it was necessary should be more supple than the back; and the greatest of all in the

neck, for the free motion of the head. Then, secondly, in order to afford a passage for the descent of the medullar substance, each of these bones is bored through in the middle in such a manner, as that, when put together, the hole in one bone falls into a line, and corresponds with the holes in the two bones contiguous to it. By which means, the perforated pieces, when joined, form an entire, close, uninterrupted channel; at least, while the spine is upright and at rest. But, as a settled posture is

inconsistent with its use, a great difficulty still remained, which was to prevent the vertebrae shifting upon one another, so as to break the line of the canal as often as the body moves or twists; or the joints gaping externally, whenever the body is bent for-ward, and the spine thereupon made to take the form of a bow. These dangers, which are mechanical, are mechanically provided against. The vertebrae, by means of their processes and projections, and of the articulations which some of

these form with one another at their extremities, are so locked in, and confined as to maintain in what are called the bodies, or broad surfaces of the bones, the relative position nearly unaltered; and to throw the change and the pressure produced by flexion, almost entirely upon the intervening cartilages, the springiness and yielding nature of whose substance admits of all the motion which is necessary to be performed upon them, without any chasm being produced by a separation

of the parts. I say of all the motion which is necessary; for although we bend our backs to every degree almost of inclination, the motion of each vertebra is very small; such is the advantage which we receive from the chain being composed of so many links, the spine of so many bones. Had it consisted of three or four bones only, in bending the body the spinal marrow must have been bruised at every angle. The reader need not be told that these intervening cartilages are gristles; and he may see them in perfection in a loin

of veal. Their form also favors the same intention. They are thicker before than behind; so that, when we stoop forward, the compressible substance of the cartilage, yielding in its thicker and anterior part to the force which squeezes it, brings the surfaces of the adjoining vertebrae nearer to the being parallel with one another than they were before, instead of increasing the inclination of their planes, which must have occasioned a fissure, or opening between them. Thirdly, for the medullar canal giving out in its

course, and in a convenient order, a supply of nerves to different parts of the body, notches are made in the upper and lower edge of every vertebra; two on each edge; equidistant on each side from the middle line of the back.

When the vertebrae are put together, these notches, exactly fitting, form small holes, through which the nerves, at each articulation, issue out in pairs, in order to send their branches to every part of the body, and with an equal bounty to both sides of the body. The

fourth purpose assigned to the same instrument, is the insertion of the bases of the muscles, and the support of the ends of the ribs; and for this fourth purpose, especially the former part of it, a figure, specifically suited to the design, and unnecessary for the other purposes, is given to the constituent bones. While they are plain, and round, and smooth, toward the front, where any roughness or projection might have wounded the adjacent viscera, they run out, behind, and on each side, into long processes, to

which processes the muscles necessary to the motions of the trunk are fixed; and fixed with such art, that while the vertebrae supply a basis for the muscles, the muscles help to keep these bones in their position, or by their tendons to tie them together.

"That most important, however, and general property, viz. the strength of the compages, and the security against luxation, was to be still more specially consulted; for where so many joints were

concerned, and where, in every one, derangement would have been fatal, it became a subject of studious precaution. For this purpose, the vertebrae are articulated, that is, the movable joints between them are formed by means of those projections of their substance, which we have mentioned under the name of processes; and these so lock in with, and over wrap one-another, as to secure the body of the vertebra, not only from accidentally slipping, but even from being pushed out of its place by any violence; short

of that which would break the bone."

Instances of design and wonderful contrivance are as numerous as there are organized bodies in nature, and as there are relations between bodies which are not organized. The subject is, therefore, inexhaustible. The cases stated are sufficient for the illustration of this species of argument for the existence of an intelligent First Cause. Many others are given with great force and interest in the Natural Theology of Paley, from

which the above quotations have been made; but his chapter on the Personality of the Deity contains applications of the argument from design, too important to be overlooked. The same course of reasoning may be traced in many other writers, but by none has it been expressed with so much clearness and felicity.

"Contrivance, if established, appears to me to prove everything which we wish to prove. Among other things it proves the personality of the Deity, as

distinguished from what is sometimes called nature, sometimes called a principle; which terms, in the mouths of those who use them philosophically, seem to be intended, to admit and to express an efficacy, but to exclude and to deny a personal agent. Now that which can contrive, which can design, must be a person. These capacities constitute personality, for they imply consciousness and thought. They require that which can perceive an end or purpose; as well as the power of providing means,

and of directing them to their end. They require a center in which perceptions unite, and from which volitions flow; which is mind. The acts of a mind prove the existence of a mind; and in whatever a mind resides, is a person.

"Of this we are certain, that, whatever the Deity be, neither the universe, nor any part of it which we see, can be he. The universe itself is merely a collective name: its parts are all which are real, or which are things. Now inert matter is out of the question; and

organized substances include marks of contrivance. But whatever includes marks of contrivance, whatever, in its constitution, testifies design, necessarily carries us to something beyond itself, to some other being, to a designer prior to, and out of itself. No animal, for instance, can have contrived its own limbs and senses; can have been the author to itself of the design with which they were constructed. That supposition involves all the absurdity of self-creation, i. e. of acting without

existing. Nothing can be God which is ordered by a wisdom and a will which itself is void of; which is indebted for any of its properties to contrivance ab extra. The not having that in his nature which requires the exertion of another prior being, (which property is sometimes called self-sufficiency, and sometimes self-comprehension,) appertains to the Deity, as his essential distinction, and removes his nature from that of all things which we see. Which consideration contains the

answer to a question that has sometimes been asked, namely, why, since something or other must have existed from eternity, may not the present universe be that something? The contrivance perceived in it, proves that to be impossible. Nothing contrived can, in a strict and proper sense, be eternal, forasmuch as the contriver must have existed before the contrivance.

"We have already noticed, and we must here notice

again, the misapplication of the term 'law,'

and the mistake concerning the idea which that term expresses in physics, whenever such idea is made to take the place of power, and still more of an intelligent power, and, as such, to be assigned for the cause of anything, or of any property of anything that exists. This is what we are secretly apt to do when we speak of organized bodies (plants, for instance, or animals) owing their production, their form, their growth, their

qualities, their beauty, their use, to any law, or laws of nature; and when we are contented to sit down with that answer to our inquiries concerning them. I say once more, that it is a perversion of language to assign any law, as the efficient operative cause of anything. A law presupposes an agent, for it is only the mode according to which an agent proceeds; it implies a power, for it' is the order according to which that power acts. Without this agent, without this power, which are both distinct

from itself, the 'law' does nothing; is nothing.

"What has been said concerning ' law,' holds true of mechanism. Mechanism is not itself power.

Mechanism without power can do nothing. Let a watch be contrived and constructed ever so ingeniously; be its parts ever so many, ever so complicated, ever so finely wrought, or artificially put together, it cannot go without a weight or spring, i. e. without a force independent of, and

ulterior to its mechanism. The spring, acting at the center, will produce different motions and different results, according to the variety of the intermediate mechanism. One and the self-same spring, acting in one and the same manner, viz. by simply expanding itself, may be the cause of a hundred different, and all useful movements, if a hundred different and well-devised sets of wheels be placed between it and the final effect, e. g. may point out the hour of the day, the day of the month, the age

of the moon, the position of the planets, the cycle of the years, and many other serviceable notices; and these movements may fulfill their purposes with more or less perfection, according as the mechanism is better or worse contrived, or better or worse executed, or in a better or worse state of repair; but in all cases, it is necessary that the spring act at the center. The course of our reasoning upon such a subject would be this. By inspecting the watch, even when standing still, we get a proof of

contrivance, and of a contriving mind having been employed about it. In the form and obvious relation of its parts, we see enough to convince us of this. If we pull the works in pieces, for the purpose of a closer examination, we are still more fully convinced. But when we see the watch going, we see proof of another point, viz. that there is a power somewhere, and somehow or other applied to it; a power in action; that there is more in the subject than the mere wheels of the machine; that there is a

secret spring, or a gravitating plummet; in a word, that there is force and energy, as well as mechanism.

"So, then, the watch in motion establishes to the observer two conclusions: one, that thought, contrivance, and design have been employed in the forming, proportioning, and arranging of its parts; and that whoever or wherever he be, or were, such a contriver there is, or was: the other, that force or power, distinct from mechanism, is, at this

present time, acting upon it. If I saw a hand mill even at rest, I should see contrivance; but if I saw it grinding, I should be assured that a hand was at the windlass, though in another room. It is the same in nature. In the works of nature we trace mechanism; and this alone proves contrivance; but living, active, moving, productive nature, proves also the exertion of a power at the center; for wherever the power resides, may be denominated the center.

"The intervention and disposition of what are called 'second causes' fall under the same observation. This disposition is or is not mechanism, according as we can or cannot trace it by our senses, and means of examination. That is all the difference there is; and it is a difference which respects our faculties, not the things themselves. Now where the order of second causes is mechanical, what is here said of mechanism strictly applies to it. But it would be always mechanism (natural chemistry, for

instance, would be mechanism) if our senses were acute enough to descry it. Neither mechanism, therefore, in the works of nature, nor the intervention of what are called second causes, (for I think that they are the same thing,) excuses the necessity of an agent distinct from both.

"If, in tracing these causes, it be said, that we find certain general properties of matter, which have nothing in them that bespeaks intelligence, I answer that, still, the

managing of these properties, the pointing and directing them to the uses which we see made of them, demands intelligence in the highest degree. For example, suppose animal secretions to be elective attractions, and that such and such attractions universally belong to such and such substances; in all which there is no intellect concerned; still the choice and collocation of these substances, the fixing upon right substances, and disposing them in right places, must be an act of intelligence.

What mischief would follow, were there a single transposition of the secretory organs; a single mistake in arranging the glands which compose them!

"There may be many second causes, and many courses of second causes, one behind another, between what we observe of nature and the Deity; but there must be intelligence somewhere; there must be more in nature than what we see; and among the things unseen, there must be an

intelligent, designing author. The philosopher beholds with astonishment the production of things around him. Unconscious particles of matter take their stations, and severally range themselves in an order, so as to become collectively plants or animals, i. e. organized bodies, with parts bearing strict and evident relation to one another, and to the utility of the whole: and it should seem that these particles could not move in any other way than as they do; for they testify not the smallest sign of choice, or

liberty, or discretion. There may be particular intelligent beings guiding these motions in each case; or they may be the result of trains of mechanical dispositions, fixed beforehand by an intelligent appointment, and kept in action by a power at the center. But in either case there must be intelligence."

The above arguments, as they irresistibly confirm the Scripture doc trine of the existence of an intelligent First Cause, expose the extreme folly

and absurdity of Atheism. The first of the leading theories which it has assumed, is the eternity of matter. When this means the eternity of the world in its present form and constitution, it is contradicted by the changes which are actually and every moment taking place in it; and, as above argued, by the contrivance which it everywhere presents, and which, it has been proved, necessarily supposes that designing intelligence we call God. When it means the eternity of unorganized matter

only, the subject which has received those various forms, and orderly arrangements, which imply contrivance and final causes, it leaves untouched the question of an intelligent cause, the author of the forms with which it has been impressed. A creative cause may, and must, nevertheless exist; and this was the opinion of many of the ancient Theistical philosophers, who ascribed eternity both to God and to matter; and considered creation, not as the bringing of something out

of nothing, but as the framing of what actually existed without order and without end. But though this tenet was held, in conjunction with a belief in the Deity, by many who had not the light of the Scripture revelation; yet its manifest tendency is to Atheism, because it supposes the impossibility of creation in the absolute sense; and thus produces limited notions of God, from which the transition to an entire denial of him is an easy step. In modern times, therefore, the opinion of the eternity of

matter has been held by few but absolute Atheists.

What seems to have led to the notion of a pre-existent and eternal matter out of which the world was formed, was the supposed impossibility of a creation from nothing, according to the maxim,

"ex nihilo nihil fit." The philosophy was however bad, because as no contradiction was implied in thus ascribing to God the power to create out of nothing; it was a matter of choice, whether to allow what was merely not

comprehensible by man, or to put limitations without reason to the power of God. Thus Cudworth:-

"Because it is undeniably certain, concerning ourselves, and all imperfect beings, that none of these can create any new substance, men are apt to measure all things by their own scantling, and to suppose it universally impossible for any power whatever thus to create. But since it is certain, that imperfect beings can themselves produce some things out of nothing pre-

existing, as new cogitations, new local motion, and new modifications of things corporeal, it is surely reasonable to think that an absolutely perfect being can do something more, i. e. create new substances, or give them their whole being. And it may well be thought as easy for God or an omnipotent Being to make a whole world, matter and all, ex ok onton, as it is for us to create a thought or to move a finger, or for the sun to send out rays, or a candle light, or lastly, for an

opaque body to produce an image of itself in a glass or water, or to project a shadow: all these imperfect things being but the energies, rays, images, or shadows of the Deity. For a substance to be made out of nothing by God, of a Being infinitely perfect, is not for it to be made out of nothing in the impossible sense, because it comes from him who is all. Nor can it be said to be impossible for anything whatever to be made by that which hath not only infinitely greater perfection, but also infinite

active power It is indeed true, that infinite power itself cannot do things in their own nature impossible; and, therefore, those who deny creation ought to prove that it is absolutely impossible for a substance, though not for an accident or modification, to be brought from non-existence into being. But nothing is in itself impossible, which does not imply a contradiction: and though it be a contradiction for a thing to be and not to be at the, same time, there is surely no contradiction in

conceiving an imperfect being, which before was not, afterward to be."

It is not necessary to refer to the usual metaphysical arguments to show the non-eternity of matter, by proving that its existence must be necessary if it be eternal; and, if necessary, that it must be infinite, &c. They are not of much value. Every man bears in himself the proof of a creation out of nothing, so that the objection from the impossibility of the thing is at once removed.

"That sensation, intelligence, consciousness, and volition, are not the result of any modifications of figure and motion, is a truth as evident as that consciousness is not swift, nor volition square.

If then these be the powers or properties of a being distinct from matter, which we think capable of the most complete proof, every man who does not believe that his mind has existed and been conscious from eternity, must be convinced that the power of creation has been exerted on

himself. If it be denied that there is any immaterial substance in man, still it must be confessed that, as matter is not essentially conscious, and cannot be made so by any particular organization, there is some real thing or entity, call it what you please, which has either existed and been conscious from eternity, or been in time brought from non-entity into existence by an exertion of infinite power.

"The former no sober person will contend for,

and the latter therefore must be admitted.

On these grounds the absurdity of Atheism is manifest. If it attributes the various arrangements of material things to chance, that is, to nothing, it rests in design without a designer; in effects without a cause. If it allow an intelligent cause operating to produce these effects, but denies him to be almighty, by ascribing eternity to matter, and placing its creation beyond his power, it acknowledges with us indeed a God; but

makes him an imperfect being, limited in his power; and it chooses to acknowledge this limited and imperfect being not only without reason, for we have just seen that creation out of nothing implies no contradiction, but even against reason, for the acknowledgment of a creation out of nothing must be forced from him by his own experience, unless he will contend that that conscious being himself may have existed from eternity without being conscious of existence,

except for the space of a few past years.

On some modern schemes of Atheism, Paley justly remarks:-

"I much doubt, whether the new schemes have advanced anything upon the old, or done more than changed the terms of the nomenclature. For instance, I could never see the difference between the antiquated system of atoms and Buffon's organic molecules. This philosopher, having made a planet by knocking off from the sun a piece of melted

glass, in consequence of the stroke of a comet; and having set it in motion by the same stroke, both round its own axis and the sun, finds his next difficulty to be, how to bring plants and animals upon it. In order to solve this difficulty, we are to suppose the universe replenished with particles endowed with life, but without organization or senses, of their own; and endowed also with a tendency to marshal themselves into organized forms. The concourse of these particles, by virtue of

this tendency, but without intelligence, will, or direction, (for I do not find that any of these qualities are ascribed to them,) has produced the living forms which we now see.

"Very few of the conjectures, which philosophers hazard upon these subjects, have more of pretension in them, than the challenging you to show the direct impossibility of the hypothesis.

In the present example there seemed to be a positive objection to the

whole scheme upon the very face of it; which was that, if the case were as here represented, new combinations ought to be perpetually taking place; new plants and animals, or organized bodies which were neither, ought to be starting up before our eyes every day. For this, however, our philosopher has an answer. While so many forms of plants and animals are already in existence, and consequently, so many ' internal moulds,' as he calls them, are prepared and at hand, the organic particles

run into these moulds, and are employed in supplying an accession of substance to them, as well for their growth, as for their propagation;- by which means things keep their ancient course. But, says the same philosopher, should any general loss or destruction of the present constitution of organized bodies take place, the particles for want of ' moulds' into which they might enter, would run into different combinations, and replenish the waste with

new species of organized substances.

"Is there any history to countenance this notion? Is it known, that any destruction has been so repaired? Any desert thus re-peopled?

"But, these wonder-working instruments, these ' internal moulds,' what are they after all? What, when examined, but a name without signification? Unintelligible, if not self contradictory; at the best differing in nothing from the 'essential forms' of the Greek philosophy? One

short sentence of Buffon's works exhibits his scheme as follows:- 'When this nutritious and prolific matter, which is diffused throughout all nature, passes through the internal mould of an animal or vegetable, and finds a proper matrix or receptacle, it gives rise to an animal or vegetable of the same species.' Does any reader annex a meaning to the expression t internal mould,' in this sentence? Ought it then to be said, that though we have little notion of an internal mould, we have not much

more of a designing mind? The very contrary of this assertion is the truth. When we speak of an artificer or an architect, we talk of what is comprehensible to our understanding, and familiar to our experience. We use no other terms, than what refer us for their meaning to our consciousness and observation; what express the constant objects of both; whereas names like that we have mentioned, refer us to nothing; excite no idea; convey a sound to

the ear, but I think do no more.

"Another system, which has lately been brought forward, and with much ingenuity, is that of appetencies. The principle, and the short account of the theory, is this: pieces of soft, ductile matter, being endued with propensities or appetencies for particular actions, would, by continual endeavors, carried on through a long series of generations, work themselves gradually into suitable forms; and at length acquire, though

perhaps by obscure and almost imperceptible improvements, an organization fitted to the action which their respective propensities led them to exert. A piece of animated matter for example, that was endued with a propensity to fly, though ever so shapeless, though no other we will suppose than a round ball, to begin with, would, in a course of ages, if not in a million of years, perhaps in a hundred mil-lion of years, (for our theorists, having eternity to dispose of, are never sparing in

time,) acquire wings. The same tendency to locomotion in an aquatic animal, or rather in an animated lump which might happen to be surrounded by water, would end in the production of fins: in a living substance, confined to the solid earth, would put out legs and feet; or if it took a different turn, would break the body into ringlets, and conclude by crawling upon the ground.

"The scheme under consideration is open to the same objection with

other conjectures of a similar tendency, viz. a total defect of evidence. No changes, like those which the theory requires, have ever been observed. All the changes in Ovid's Metamorphoses might have been effected by these appetencies, if the theory were true: yet not an example, nor the pretence of an example, is offered of a single change being known to have taken place.

"The solution, when applied to the works of nature generally, is contradicted by many of

the phenomena, and totally inadequate to others. The ligaments or strictures, by which the tendons are tied down at the angles of the joints, could by no possibility be formed by the motion or exercise of the tendons themselves; by any appetency exciting these parts into action: or by any tendency arising there from. The tendency is all the other way; the conatus in constant opposition to them. Length of time does not help the case at all, but the reverse. The valves also in the blood vessels could never be

formed in the manner which our theorist proposes. The blood, in its right and natural course, has no tendency to form them. When obstructed or refluent, it has the contrary. These parts could not grow out of their use, though they had eternity to grow in.

"The senses of animals appear to me altogether incapable of receiving the explanation of their origin which this theory affords. Including under the word 'sense' the organ and the perception, we have no

account of either. How will our philosopher get at vision, or make an eye? How should the blind animal affect sight, of which blind animals, we know, have neither conception nor desire? Affecting it, by what operation of its will, by what endeavor to see, could it so determine the fluids of its body, as to inchoate the formation of an eye? Or suppose the eye formed, would the perception follow? The same of the other senses. And this objection holds its force, ascribe what you will to the

hand of time, to the power of habit, to changes too slow to be observed by man, or brought within any comparison which he is able to make of past things with the present: concede what you please to these arbitrary and unattested suppositions, how will they help you? Here is no inception. No laws, no course, no powers of nature which prevail at present, nor any analogous to these, could give commencement to a new sense. And it is in vain to inquire, how that might proceed which could never begin.

"In the last place: what do these appetencies mean when applied to plants? I am not able to give a signification to the term, which can be transferred from animals to plants; or which is common to both. Yet a no less successful organization is found in plants, than what obtains in animals. A solution is wanted for one as well as the other.

"Upon the whole; after all the schemes and struggles of a reluctant philosophy, the necessary resort is a Deity. The marks of design

are too strong to be got over. Design must have had a designer. That designer must have been a person. That person is GOD."

Well has it been said, that Atheism is, in all its theories, a credulity of the grossest kind, equally degrading to the understanding and to the heart: for what reflecting and honest mind can for a moment put these theories into competition with that revealed in the Scriptures, at once so sublime and so convincing; and which instead of shunning, like

those just mentioned, an appeal to facts, bids us look to the heavens and to the earth; assemble the aggregate of beings, great and small; and examine their structure, and mark their relations, in proof that there must exist an all-wise and an almighty Creator?

Such is the evidence which the doctrine of a Deity receives from experience, observation, and rational induction, a posteriori. The argument thus stated, has an overwhelming force, and certainly needs do

other, though attempts have been made to obtain proof a priori, and thus to meet and rout the forces of the enemy in both directions. No instance is however I believe on record of an Atheistic conversion having been produced by this process, and it may be ranked among the over-zealous attempts of the advocates of truth. It is well intentioned, but unsatisfactory, and so far as on the one hand it has led to a neglect of the more convincing, and powerful course of argument drawn from "the things which do

appear;" and on the other, has encouraged a dependence upon a mode of investigation, to which the human mind is inadequate, which in many instances is an utter mental delusion, and which scarcely two minds will conduct in the same manner; it has probably been mischievous in its effects by inducing a skepticism not arising out of the nature of the case, but from the imperfect and unsatisfactory investigations of the human understanding, pushed beyond the limit of

its powers. In most instances it is a sword, which cuts two ways; and the mere imaginary assumptions of those who think they have found out a new way to demonstrate truth, have in many instances either done disservice to it by absurdity, or yielded principles, which unbelievers have connected with the most injurious conclusions. We need only instance the doctrine of the necessary existence of the Deity, when reasoned a priori. Some acute infidels have thanked those for the

discovery who intended nothing so little as to encourage error; and have argued from that notion, that the Supreme Being cannot be a free agent, and have thus set the first principles of religion at variance with the Scriptures. The fact seems to be, that though, when once the existence of a first and intelligent cause is established, some of his attributes are capable of proof a priori, (how much that proof is worth is another question,) yet that his existence itself admits of no such demonstration,

and that in the nature of the thing it is impossible.

The reason of this is drawn from the very nature of an argument a priori. It is an argument from an antecedent to a consequent, from cause to effect. If therefore there be any thing existing in nature, or could have been, from which the being and attributes of God might have been derived, or anything which can be justly considered as prior in order of nature or conception to the first cause of all things; then

may the argument from such prior thing or principle be good and valid.

- But if there is in reality nothing prior to the being of God, considered as the first cause and causality, nothing in nature, nothing in reason, then the attempt is fruitless to argue from it; and we improperly pretend to search into the grounds or reasons of the first cause, of whom antecedently we neither do nor can know anything.

As the force of the argument a priori has

however been much debated, it may not be useless to enter somewhat more fully into the subject.

One of the earliest and ablest advocates of this mode of demonstrating the existence of God, was Dr. Samuel Clarke. He however first proceeds a posteriori to prove, from the actual existence of dependent beings, the existence from eternity of "one unchangeable and independent Being;" and thus makes himself debtor to this obvious and plain demonstration before he

can prove that this Being is, in his sense, necessarily existent. Necessity of existence is therefore tacitly acknowledged, not to be a tangible idea in the first instance; and the weight of the proof is tacitly confessed to rest upon the argument from effect to cause, which if admitted needs no assistance from a more abstract course of arguing. For if the first argument be allowed, every thing else follows; and it must be allowed, before the higher ground of demonstration can be taken. We have seen

the guarded manner in which Howe, in the quotation before given, has stated the notion of the necessary existence of the Divine Being. Dr. S. Clarke and his followers have refined upon this, and given a view of the subject which is liable to the strongest objections. His words are, "To be self-existent is to exist by an absolute necessity, originally in the nature of the thing itself;" and "this necessity must not be barely consequent upon our supposition of the existence of such a being,

for then it would not be a necessity absolutely such in itself, nor be the ground or foundation of the existence of anything, being on the contrary only a consequent of it; but it must antecedently force itself upon us whether we will or not; even when we are endeavoring to suppose that no such being exists." (Demonstration 1.) One of the reasons given for this opinion is, "there must be in nature a permanent ground or reason for the existence of the first cause, otherwise its being would be owing to mere chance."

But to this it has been well replied, "Why must we say that God has his existence from, or that he does exist for some prior cause or reason? Why may we not say that God exists as the first cause of all things, and thereupon surcease from all farther inquiries? God himself said ' I am,' and he had done. But the argument, if it did prove anything, would prove too much. To evince which, let the same way of reasoning be applied to what you call the ground or the reason of the existence of the first cause, and then with very

little variation, I retort upon you in your own words. If this ground or reason be itself anything, or any property of anything, of what nature, kind or degree soever, there must according to your way of reasoning, be in nature a ground or reason of the existence of such your antecedent necessity, 'a reason why it is, rather than why it is not, otherwise its existence will be owing to, or dependent on, mere chance.' You observe elsewhere that 'nothing can be more absurd than to suppose

that anything, or any circumstance of anything, is, and yet that there is absolutely no reason why it is, rather than why it is not.'

This consideration you allege as a vindication of your assigning a reason, a priori, for the existence of the first cause. If therefore your supposed reason, ground, or necessity, be 'anything or any supposable circumstance of anything,' as surely it must be, if not mere nothing, then by the same rule, such ' ground," necessity,' &c,

must have a reason, a priori, why it is, rather than why it is not, and after that another, and then a third, and so on in infinitum. And thus in your, way we may be always seeking a first cause, and never be able to find one, whereon to fix ourselves, or check our restless and unprofitable inquiries. While indeed we consider only inferior existences and second causes, there will always be room left for inquiring why such things are, and how such things came to be as they are; because this is only seeking and

investigating the initial, the efficient, or the final cause of their existence. But when we are advanced beyond all causes procatarctical and final, it remains only to say, that such is our first cause and causality, that we know it exists, and without prior cause; and with this you yourself will be obliged to fall in, the first step you farther take; for if we ask you of the antecedent necessity, whence it is, and what prior ground there was for it, you must yourself be content to say-so it is, you know not why,

you know not how." (Gretton's Review of the Argument a priori.)

The necessary existence of the first cause, considered as a logical necessity, may be made out without difficulty, and is indeed demonstrated 'n the arguments given above; but the natural necessity of his existence is a subject too subtle for human grasp, and, from its obscurity, is calculated to mislead. Everything important in the idea, so far as it is unexceptionable, is well and safely expressed by

Baxter. "That which could be eternally without a cause, and itself cause all things, is self-sufficient and independent." (Reasons of the Christian Religion.) This seems the only true notion of necessary existence, and care should be taken to use the term in a definite and comprehensible sense. The word necessity when applied to existence may be taken in two acceptations, either as it arises from the relation which the existence of that of which it is affirmed has to the existence of other things,

or from the relation which the actual existence of that thing has to the manner of its own existence. In the former sense, it denotes that the supposition of the non-existence of that of which the necessity is affirmed, implies the non-existence of things we know to exist. Thus some independent being does necessarily exist; because to suppose no independent being, implies that there are no dependent beings, the contrary of which we know to be true. In the second sense, necessity means that the being of

which it is affirmed exists after such a manner as that it never could in time past have been non-existent, or can in future time cease to be. Thus every independent being, as it exists without a cause, is necessarily existing, because existence is essential to such a being; so that it never could begin to exist, and never can cease to be: for to suppose a being to begin to exist, or to lose its existence, is to suppose a change from non-entity to entity, or vice versa; and to suppose such a change is to suppose a cause upon which that

being depends. Every being therefore which is independent, that is, which had no cause of its existence, must exist necessarily, and cannot possibly have begun to exist in time past, or cease to be in time future.

Still farther on Dr. S. Clarke's view of the necessary existence of the Supreme Being, it has been observed,

"But what is this necessity which proves so much? It is the ground of existence (he says) of that which exists of itself; and if so, it must, in

the order of nature, and in our conceptions, be antecedent to that being of whose existence it is the ground. Concerning such a principle, there are but three suppositions which can possibly be made; and all of them may be shown to be absurd and contradictory. We may sup pose either the substance itself, some property of that substance, or something extrinsic to both, to be this antecedent ground of existence prior in the order of nature to the first cause.

"One would think, from the turn of the argument which here represents this antecedent necessity as efficient and causal, that it were considered as something extrinsic to the first cause. Indeed, if the words have any meaning in them at all, or any force of argument, they must be so understood, just as we understand them of any external cause producing its effect. But as an extrinsic principle is absurd in itself, and is beside rejected by Dr. S. Clarke, who says expressly, that 'of the thing which

derives not its being from any other thing, this necessity or ground of existence must be in the thing itself,' we need not say a word more of the last of these suppositions.

"Let us then consider the first; let us take the substance itself, and try whether it can be conceived as prior or antecedent to itself in our conceptions or in the order of nature. Surely we need not observe that nothing can be more absurd or contradictory than such a supposition. Dr.

S. Clarke himself repeatedly affirms, and it would be strange indeed if he did not affirm, that no being, nothing whatever, can be conceived as in any respect prior to the first cause.

"The only remaining supposition is, that some attribute or property of the self-existent being may be conceived as in the order of nature antecedent to that being. But this, if possible, is more absurd than either of the two preceding suppositions. An attribute is attributed to its subject

as its ground or support, and not the subject to its attribute. A property, in the very notion of it, is proper to the substance to which it belongs, and subsequent to it both in our conceptions and in the order of nature. An antecedent attribute, or antecedent property, is a solecism as great, and a contradiction as flat, as an antecedent subsequent or a subsequent antecedent, understood in the same sense and in the same syllogism. Every property or attribute, as such, presupposes its subject; and cannot otherwise be

understood. This is a truth so obvious and so forcible, that it sometimes extorts the assent even of those who upon other occasions labor to obscure it. It is confessed by Dr. S. Clarke, that c the scholastic way of proving the existence of the self-existent being from the absolute perfection of his nature, is usteron orotern. For all or any perfections (says he) presuppose existence; which is a petitio principii.' If therefore properties, modes, or attributes in God, be considered as perfections, (and it is impossible to

consider them as anything else,) then, by this confession of the great Author himself, they must all or any of them presuppose existence. It is indeed immediately added in the same place, 'that bare necessity of existence does not presuppose, but infer existence;' which is true only if such necessity be supposed to be a principle extrinsic, the absurdity of which has been already shown, and is indeed universally confessed. If it be a mode or property, it must presuppose the existence of

its subject, as certainly and as evidently as it is a mode or a property. It might perhaps a posteriori infer the existence of its subject, as effects may infer a cause; but that it should infer in the other way a priori is altogether as impossible as that a triangle should be a square, or a globe a parallelogram." (Law's Inquiry.)

The true idea of the necessary existence of God is, that he thus exists because it is his nature, as an independent and uncaused being, to be; his

being is necessary because it is underived, not underived because it is necessary. The first is the sober sense of the word among our old divines; the latter is a theory of modern date, and leads to no practical result whatever, except to entangle the mind in difficulty, and to give a color to some very injurious errors.

Equally unsatisfactory, and therefore quite as little calculated to serve the cause of truth, is the argument from space; which is represented by

Newton, Clarke, and others, as an infinite mode of an infinite substance, and that substance God, so that from the existence of space itself may be argued the existence of one supreme and infinite Being. Berkeley, Law, and others, have however shown the fallacy of considering space either as a substance, or a mode, and have brought these speculations under the dominion of common sense, and rescued them from metaphysical delusion. They have rightly observed, that space is a

mere negation, and that to suppose it to have existence, because it has some properties, for instance, of penetrability, or the capacity of receiving body, is the same thing as to affirm that darkness must be something because it has the capacity of receiving light, and silence something because it has the property of admitting sound, and absence the property of being supplied by presence. To reason in this manner is to assign absolute negations, and such as, in the same way, may be applied to nothing,

and then call them positive properties, and so infer that the chimera, thus clothed with them, must needs be something. The arguments in favor of the real existence of space as something positive, have failed in the hands of their first great authors, and the attempts since made to uphold them have added nothing but what is exceedingly futile, and indeed often obviously absurd. The whole of this controversy has left us only to lament the waste of labor which has been employed in erecting

around the impregnable ramparts of the great arguments on which the cause rests with so much safety, the useless encumbrances of mud and straw.

The proof of the being of a God reposes wholly then upon arguments a posteriori, and it needs no other; though we shall see as we proceed that even these arguments, strong and irrefutable as they are when rightly applied, have been used to prove more as to some of the attributes of God, than can satisfactorily

be drawn from them. Even with this safe and convincing process of reasoning at our command, we shall find, at every step of an inquiry into the Divine nature, our entire dependence upon Divine revelation, for our primary light. That must both originate our investigations, and conduct them to a satisfactory result.

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22 ATTRIBUTES OF GOD - UNITY, SPIRITUALITY

(5) "They are called attributes, because God attributes them to and affirms them of himself.

Properties, because we conceive them proper to God, and such as can be predicated only of him, so that by them we distinguish him from all other beings. Perfections, because they are the several representations of that one perfection which is himself. Names and Terms, because they

express and signify something of his essence. Notions, because they are so many apprehensions of his being as we Conceive of him in our minds." (LAWSON'S Theo-Politica.) The existence of a supreme Creator and First Cause of all things, himself uncaused, and independent, and therefore self-existent, having been proved, the next question is, whether there exists more than one such Being, or, in other words, whether we are to ascribe to him an absolute unity or soleness. On this point the testimony

of the Scriptures is express, and unequivocal. "The Lord our God is ONE Lord," Deut. 6:4. "The Lord he is God; there is NONE ELSE beside him,"

Deut. 4:35. "Thou art God ALONE," Psalm 86:10. "We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and there is none other God but ONE." Nor is this stated in Scripture, merely to exclude all other creators, governors, and deities, in connection with men, and the system of created things which we behold; but absolutely, so as to

exclude the idea of the existence, anywhere, of more than one Divine nature.

Of this unity, the proper Scripture notion may be thus expressed. Some things are one by virtue of composition, but God hath no parts, nor is compounded; but is a pure simple being. Some are one in kind, but admit many individuals of the same kind, as men, angels, and other creatures; but God is so one that there are no other gods, though there are other beings. Some

things are so one, as that there exists no other of the same kind, as are one sun, one moon, one world, one heaven; yet there might have been more, if it had pleased God so to will it. But God is so one, that there is not, there cannot be, another GOD. He is one only, and takes up the Deity so fully, as to admit no fellow. (LAWSON'S Theo-Politica.)

The proof of this important doctrine from Scripture is short and simple. We have undoubted proofs of a revelation from the Maker

and Governor of this present world. Granting him to be wise and good, "it is impossible that God should lie," and his own testimony assigns to him an exclusive Deity. If we admit the authority of the Scriptures, we admit a Deity; if we admit one God, we exclude all others. The truth of Scripture, resting as we have seen on proofs which cannot be resisted without universal skepticism, and universal skepticism being proved to be impossible by the common conduct of even the most skeptical men, the

proof of the Divine unity rests precisely on the same basis, and is sustained by the same certain evidence.

On this as on the former point however there is much rational confirmation, to which revelation has given us the key; though without that, and even in its strongest form, it may be concluded from the prevalence of polytheism among the generality of nations, and of dualism among others, that the human mind would have had but too indistinct a view of this

kind of evidence to rest in a conclusion so necessary to true religion and to settled rules of morals.

To prove the unity of God several arguments a priori have been made use of; to which mode of proof, provided the argument itself be logical, no objection lies. For though it appears absurd to attempt to prove a priori the existence of a first cause, seeing that nothing can either in order of time or order of nature be prior to him, or be conceived prior to him; yet the existence of

an independent and self-existent cause of all things being made known to us by revelation, and Confirmed by the phenomena of actual and dependent existence, a ground is laid for considering, from this fact, which is antecedent in order of nature, though not in order of time, the consequent attributes with which such a Being must be invested.

Among the arguments of this class to prove the Divine unity, the following are the principal:-

Dr. S. Clarke argues from his view of the necessary existence of the Divine Being:- "Necessity,"

he observes, "absolute in itself, is simple and uniform, and universal, without any possible difference, deformity, or variety whatsoever; and all variety or difference of existence must needs arise from some external cause, and be dependent upon it." And again: "To suppose two or more distinct beings existing of themselves necessarily, and independent of each other,

implies this contradiction that each of them being independent of each other, they may either of them be supposed to exist alone, so that it will be no contradiction to suppose the other not to exist, and consequently neither of them will be necessarily existing." (Demonstration, Prop. 7.) These arguments being however wholly founded upon that peculiar notion of necessary existence, which is advocated by the author, derive their whole authority from the principle itself, to which

some objections have been offered.

The argument from space must share the same fate. If space be an infinite attribute of an infinite substance, and an essential attribute of Deity, then the existence of one infinite substance, and one only, may probably be argued from the existence of this infinite property; but if space be a mere negation, and neither substance nor attribute, which has been sufficiently proved by the writers before referred to,

then it is worth nothing as a proof of the unity of God.

Wollaston argues, that if two or more independent beings exist, their natures must be the same or different; if different, either contrary or various. If contrary, each must destroy the operations of the other; if various, one must have what the other wants, and both cannot be perfect. If their nature be perfectly the same, then they would coincide, and indeed be but one, though called two. (Religion of Nature.)

Bishop Wilkins says, if God be an infinitely perfect being, it is impossible to imagine two such beings at the same time, because they must have several perfections, or the same. If the former, neither of them can be God, because neither of them has all possible perfections. If they have both equal perfections, neither of them can be absolutely perfect, because it is not so great to have the same equal perfections in common with another, as to be superior to all others.

(Principles of Natural Religion.)

"The nature of God," says Bishop Pearson, "consists in this, that he is the prime and original cause of all things, as an independent being, upon whom all things else depend, and likewise the ultimate end or final cause of all; but in this sense, two prime causes are unimaginable, and for all things to depend on one, and yet for there to be more independent beings than one, is a clear contradiction." (Exposition of the Creed.)

The best argument of this kind is however that which arises from absolute perfection, the idea of which forces itself upon our minds, when we reflect upon the nature of a self-existent and independent Being. Such a being there is, as is sufficiently proved from the existence of beings dependent and derived; and it is impossible to admit that without concluding, that he who is independent and underived, who subsists wholly and only of himself without depending on any other, must owe this

absoluteness to so peculiar an excellency of its own nature as we cannot well conceive to be less than that by which it comprehends in itself the most boundless and unlimited fullness of being, life, power, or whatsoever can be conceived under the name of a perfection. "To such a being infinity may be justly ascribed; and infinity, not extrinsically considered with respect to time and place, but intrinsically, as imparting bottomless profundity of essence, and the full confluence of all kinds and

degrees of perfection without bound or limit."

(Howe's Living Temple.) "Limitation is the effect of some superior cause, which, in the present instance, there cannot be: consequently, to suppose limits where there can be no limiter, is to suppose an effect without a cause. For a being to be limited or deficient in any respect, is to be dependent in that respect on some other being which gave it just so much and no more; consequently that being which in no respect

depends upon any other, is in no respect limited or deficient. In all beings capable of increase or diminution, and consequently incapable of perfection or absolute infinity, limitation or defect is indeed a necessary consequence of existence, and is only a negation of that perfection which is wholly incompatible with their nature; and therefore in these beings it requires no farther cause. But in a being naturally capable of perfection or absolute infinity, all imperfection or finiteness, as it cannot flow

from the nature of that being, seems to require some ground or reason; which reason, as it is foreign from the being itself, must be the effect of some other external cause, and consequently cannot have place in the first cause. That the self-existent being is capable of perfection or absolute infinity must be granted, because he is manifestly the subject of one infinite or perfect attribute, namely, eternity or absolute invariable existence. In this respect his existence is perfect, and

therefore it may be perfect in every other respect also. Now that which is the subject of one infinite attribute or perfection, must have all its attributes infinitely or in perfection; since to have any perfections in a finite limited manner, when the subject and these perfections are both capable of strict infinity, would be the fore-mentioned absurdity of positive limitation without a cause. To suppose this eternal and independent Being limited in or by its own nature, is to suppose

some antecedent nature or limiting quality superior to that being, to the existence of which no thing, no quality, is in any respect antecedent or superior. The same method of reasoning will prove knowledge and every other perfection to be infinite in the Deity, when once we have proved that perfection to belong to him at all; at least it will show, that to suppose it limited is unreasonable, since we can find no manner of ground for limitation in any respect; and this is as far as we need go, or perhaps as

natural light will lead us." (Dr. gleig.)

The connection between the steps of the argument from the self-existence and infinity of the Deity to his unity, may be thus traced. There is actually existing an absolute, entire fullness of wisdom, power, and of all other perfection. This absolute entire fullness of perfection is infinite.

This infinite perfection must have its seat somewhere. Its primary original seat can be nowhere but in necessary self-subsisting being. If

then we suppose a plurality of self-originate beings concurring to make up the seat or subject of this infinite perfection, each one must either be of finite and partial perfection, or infinite and absolute. Infinite and absolute it cannot be, because one self-originate, infinitely and absolutely perfect being, will necessarily comprehend all perfection, and leave nothing to the rest. Nor finite, because many finites can never make one infinite; nor many broken parcels or fragments of perfection

ever make infinite and absolute perfection, even though their number, if that were possible, were infinite.

To these arguments from the Divine nature, proofs of his unity are to be drawn from his works.

While we have no revelation of or from any other being than from him whom we worship as GOD; so the frame and constitution of nature present us with a harmony and order which show, that their Creator and Preserver is but one. We see but one

mil and one intelligence, and therefore there is but one Being. The light of this truth must have been greatly obscured to heathens, who knew not how to account for the admixture of good and evil which are in the world, and many of them therefore supposed both a good and an evil deity. To us, however, who know how to account for this fact from the relation in which man stands to the moral government of an offended Deity, and the connection of this present state with another; and that it is to

man a state of correction and discipline; not only is this difficulty removed, but additional proof is afforded, that the Creator and the Ruler of the world is but one Being. If two independent beings of equal power concurred to make the world, the good and the evil would be equal; but the good predominates. - Between the good and the evil there could also be no harmony or connection; but we plainly see evil subjected to the purposes of benevolence, and so to accord with it, which at

once removes the objection.

"Of the unity of the Deity," says Paley, "the proof is the uniformity of plan observable in the universe. The universe itself is a system; each part either depending upon other parts, or being connected with other parts by some common law of motion, or by the presence of some common substance. One principle of gravitation causes a stone to drop toward the earth, and the moon to wheel round it. One law of attraction

carries all the different planets about the sun. This, philosophers demonstrate. There are also other points of agreement among them, which may be considered as marks of the identity of their origin, and of their intelligent author. In all are found the convenience and stability derived from gravitation. They all experience vicissitudes of days and nights, and changes of season. They all, at least Jupiter, Mars, and Venus, have the same advantages from their atmospheres as we have. In all the planets, the axes of

rotation are permanent. Nothing is more probable than that the same attracting influence, acting according to the same rule, reaches to the fixed stars; but if this be only probable, another thing is certain, namely, that the same element of light does. The light from a fixed star affects our eyes in the same manner, is refracted and reflected according to the same laws, as the light of a candle. The velocity of the light of the fixed stars is also the same, as the velocity of the light of the sun, reflected from the

satellites of Jupiter. The heat of the sun, in kind, differs nothing from the heat of a coal fire.

"In our own globe the case is clearer. New countries are continually discovered, but the old laws of nature are always found in them; new plants, perhaps, or animals, but always in company with plants and animals which we already know; and always possessing many of the same general properties. We never get among such original or totally different modes of existence, as to

indicate that we are come into the province of a different Creator, or under the direction of a different will. In truth, the same order of things attends us wherever we go. The elements act upon one another, electricity operates, the tides rise and fall, the magnetic needle elects its position in one region of the earth and sea as well as in another. One atmosphere invests all parts of the globe, and connects all; one sun illuminates; one moon exerts its specific attraction upon all parts. If there be a

variety in natural effects, as, for example, in the tides of different seas, that very variety is the result of the same cause, acting under different circumstances. In many cases this is proved; in all, is probable.

"The inspection and comparison of living forms add to this argument examples without number.

Of all large terrestrial animals, the structure is very much alike; their senses nearly the same; their natural functions and passions nearly the same; their viscera nearly the

same, both in substance, shape, and office; digestion, nutrition, circulation, secretion, go on, in a similar manner, in all; the great circulating fluid is the same; for I think no difference has been discovered in the properties of blood from whatever animal it be drawn. The experiment of transfusion proves that the blood of one animal will serve for another. The skeletons also of the larger terrestrial animals show particular varieties, but still under a great general affinity. The resemblance is

somewhat less, yet sufficiently evident, between quadrupeds and birds. They are all alike in five respects, for one in which they differ.

"In fish, which belong to another department, as it were, of nature, the points of comparison become fewer. But we never lose sight of our analogy; e. g. we still meet with a stomach, a liver, a spine; with bile and blood; with teeth; with eyes, which eyes are only slightly varied from our own, and which variation, in truth demonstrates, not an

interruption, but a continuance of the same exquisite plan; for it is the adaptation of the organ to the element, namely, to the different refraction of light passing into the eye out of a denser medium. The provinces, also, themselves of water and earth, are connected by the species of animals which inhabit both; and also by a large tribe of aquatic animals, which closely resemble the terrestrial in their internal structure; I mean the cetaceous tribe which have hot blood, respiring lungs, bowels, and other essential

parts, like those of land animals. This similitude surely bespeaks the same creation, and the same Creator.

"Insects and shell fish appear to me to differ from other classes of animals the most widely of any. Yet even here, beside many points of particular resemblance, there exists a general relation of a peculiar kind. It is the relation of inversion; the law of contrariety: namely, that whereas in other animals, the bones to which the muscles are

attached lie within the body; in insects and shell fish they lie on the outside of it. The shell of a lobster performs to the animal the office of a bone, by furnishing to the tendons that fixed basis or immovable fulcrum, without which mechanically they could not act. The crust of an insect is its shell, and answers the like purpose.

The shell also of an oyster stands in the place of a bone; the basis of the muscles being fixed to it, in the same manner as, in

other animals, they are fixed to the bones. All which (under wonderful varieties, indeed, and adaptations of form) confesses an imitation, a remembrance, a carrying on of the same plan."

If in a large house, wherein are many mansions and a vast variety of inhabitants, there appears exact order, all from the highest to the lowest continually attending their proper business, and all lodged and constantly provided for suitably to their several conditions, we find

ourselves obliged to acknowledge one wise economy; and if in a great city or common wealth there is a perfectly regular administration, so that not only the whole society enjoys an undisturbed peace, but every member has a station assigned him which he is best qualified to fill, the unenvied chiefs constantly attending their more important cares, served by the busy inferiors, who have all a suitable accommodation, and food convenient for them, the very meanest ministering to the public

utility, and protected by the public care;- if, I say, in such a community we must conclude there is a ruling counsel, which if not naturally yet is politically one, and unless united, could not produce such harmony and order; much more have we reason to recognize one governing Intelligence in the earth, in which there are so many ranks of beings disposed of in the most convenient manner, having all their several provinces appointed to them, and their several kinds and degrees of enjoyment

liberally provided for, without encroaching upon, but rather being mutually useful to each other, according to a settled and obvious subordination. What else can account for this but a sovereign wisdom, a common provident nature presiding over, and caring for the whole? (Abernethy's Sermons.)

The importance of the doctrine of the Divine unity is obvious. The existence of one God is the basis of all true religion. Polytheism con founds and unsettles

all moral distinction, divides and destroys obligation, and takes away all sure trust and hope from man. There is one God who created us; we are therefore his property, and bound to him by an absolute obligation of obedience. He is the sole Ruler of the world, and his one immutable will constitutes the one immutable law of our actions, and thus questions of morality are settled on permanent foundations. To him alone we owe repentance, and confession of sin; to one Being alone

we are directed to look for pardon, in the method he has appointed; and if he be at peace with us, we need fear the wrath of no other, for he is supreme: we are not at a loss among a crowd of supposed deities, to which of them we shall turn in trouble; he alone receives prayer, and he is the sole and sufficient object of trust. When we know him, we know a Being of absolute perfection, and need no other friend or refuge.

Among the discoveries made to us by Divine

revelation, we find not only declarations of the existence and unity of God, but of his nature or substance, which is plainly affirmed to be spiritual; "God is a spirit." The sense of the Scriptures in this respect cannot be mistaken.

Innumerable passages and allusions in them show, that the terms spirit and body, or matter, are used in the popular sense for substances of a perfectly distinct kind, and which are manifested by distinct and in many respects

opposite and incommunicable properties: that the former only can perceive, think, reason, will, and act; that the latter is passive, impercipient divisible, and corruptible. Under these views, and in this popular language, God is spoken of in Holy Writ. He is spirit, not body; mind, not matter. He is pure spirit, unconnected even with bodily form of organs; "the invisible God, whom no man hath seen nor can see" an immaterial, incorruptible, impassible substance, an immense

mind or intelligence, self-acting, self-moving, wholly above the perception of bodily sense; free from the imperfections of matter, and all the infirmities of corporeal beings; far more excellent than any finite and created spirits, because their Creator, and therefore styled, "the Father of spirits," and "the God of the spirits of all flesh"

Such is the express testimony of Scripture as to the Divine nature. That the distinction which it holds between matter and spirit should be denied or

disregarded by infidel philosophers, is not a matter of surprise, since it is easy and as consistent in them to materialize God as man But that the attributes of spirit should have been ascribed to matter by those who nevertheless profess to admit the authority of the Biblical revelation, as in the case of the modern Unitarians and some others, is an instance of singular inconsistency. It shows with what daring an unhallowed philosophy will pursue its speculations, and warrants the con elusion, that the Scriptures

in such cases are not acknowledged upon their own proper principles, but only so far as they are supposed to agree with, or not to oppose the philosophic system which such men may have adopted. For hesitate as they may, to deny the distinction between matter and spirit, is to deny the spirituality of God; and to contradict the distinction which, as to man, is constantly kept up in every part of the Bible, the distinction between flesh and spirit. To assert that consciousness, thought,

volition, &c, are the results of organization, is to deny also what the Scripture so expressly affirms, that the souls of men exist in a disembodied state: and that in this disembodied state, not only do they exist, but that they think and feel, and act without any diminution of their energy or capacity. The immateriality of the Divine Being may therefore be considered as a point of great importance, not only as it affects our views of his nature and attributes; but because when once it is established that there

exists a pure Spirit, living, intelligent, and invested with moral properties, the question of the immateriality of the human soul may be considered as almost settled. Those who deny that, must admit that the Deity is material; or if they start at this, they must be convicted of the unphilosophical and absurd attempt to invest a substance allowed to be of an entirely different nature, the body of man, with those attributes of intelligence and volition which, in the case of the Divine Being, they have

allowed to be the properties of pure, unembodied spirit. The propositions are totally inconsistent, for they who believe that God is wholly an immaterial, and that man is wholly a material being, admit that spirit is intelligent, and that matter is intelligent. They cannot then be of different essences, and if the premises be followed out to their legitimate conclusion, either that which thinks in man must be allowed to be spiritual, or a material Deity must follow. The whole truth of revelation,

both as to God and his creature man, must be acknowledged, or the Atheism of Spinoza and Hobbes must be admitted.

The decision of Scripture on this point is not to be shaken by human reasoning, were it more plausible in its attempt to prove that matter is capable of originating thought, and that mind is a mere result of organization. The evidence from reason is however highly confirmatory of the absolute spirituality of the nature of God, and of the

unthinking nature of matter.

If we allow a First Cause at all, we must allow that cause to be intelligent. This has already been proved, from the design and contrivance manifested in his works. The first argument for the spirituality of God is therefore drawn from his intelligence, and it rests upon this principle, that intelligence is not a property of matter.

With material substance we are largely acquainted; and as to the great mass of

material bodies, we have the means of knowing that they are wholly unintelligent. This cannot be denied of every unorganized portion of matter. Its essential properties are found to be solidity, ex tension, divisibility, mobility, passiveness, &c. In all its forms and mutations, from the granite rock to the yielding atmosphere and the rapid lightning, these essential properties are discovered; they take an (infinite variety of accidental modes, but give no indication of

intelligence, or approach to intelligence. If then to know be a property of matter, it is clearly not an essential property, inasmuch as it is agreed by all, that vast masses of-this substance exist without this property, and it follows that it must be an accidental one. This therefore would be the first absurdity into which those would be driven who suppose the Divine nature to be material, that as intelligence, if allowed to be a property of matter, is an accidental and not an essential property, on this

theory it would be possible to conceive of the existence of a Deity without any intelligence at all. For take away any property from a subject which is not essential to it, and its essence still remains; and if intelligence, which in this view is but an accidental attribute of Deity, were annihilated, a Deity without perception, thought, or knowledge, would still re-main. So monstrous a conclusion shows, that if a God be at all allowed, the absolute spirituality of his nature must inevitably follow. For

if we cannot suppose a Deity without intelligence, then do we admit intelligence to be one of his essential attributes; and, as it is easy for everyone to observe that this is not an essential property of matter, the sub stance to which it is essential cannot be material.

If the unthinking nature of unorganized matter furnishes an argument in favor of the spirituality of Deity, the attempt to prove from me fact of intelligence being found in connection with matter in an

organized form, that intelligence, under certain modifications, is a property of matter, may from its fallacy be also made to yield its evidence in favor of the truth.

The position assumed is, that intelligence is the result of material organization. This at least is not true of every form of organized matter. Of the unintelligent character of vegetables we have the same evidence as of the earth on which we tread. The organization therefore which is assumed to be the

cause of thought, is that which is found in animals; and to use the argument of Dr. Priestley, "the powers of sensation, or perception, and thought, as belonging to man, not having been found but in conjunction with a certain organized system of matter, the conclusion is that they depend upon such a system." It need not now be urged, that constant connection does not imply necessary connection; and that sufficient reasons may be given to prove the connection alleged to be accidental and arbitrary. It

is sufficient in the first instance to deny this supposed constant connection between intellectual properties and systems of animal organization; and thus to take away entirely the foundation of the argument.

Man is to be considered in two states, that of life, and that of death. In one he thinks, and in the other he ceases to think; and yet for some time after death, in many cases, the organization of the human frame continues as perfect

as before. All do not die of organic disease. Death by suffocation, and other causes, is often effected without any visible violence being done to the brain, or any other of the most delicate organs. This is a well-established fact; for the most accurate anatomical observation is not able to discover, in such cases as we have referred to, the slightest organic derangement. The machine has been stopped, but the machine itself has suffered no injury; and from the period of death to the time when the matter

of the body begins to submit to the laws of chemical decomposition, its organization is as perfect as during life. If an opponent replies, that organic violence must, have been sustained, though it is indiscernible, he begs the question, and assumes that thought must depend upon organization, the very point in dispute. If more modest, he says, that the organs may have suffered, he can give no proof of it; appearances are all against him. And if he argues from the phenomenon of the

connection of thought with organization, grounding himself upon what is visible to observation only, the argument is completely repulsed by an appeal in like manner to the fact, that the organization of the animal frame can be often exhibited, visibly unimpaired by those causes which have produced death, and yet incapable of thought and intelligence. The conclusion therefore is, that mere organization cannot be the cause of intelligence, since it is plain that precisely the same

state of the organs shall often be found before and after death; and yet, without any violence having been done to them, in one moment man shall be actually intelligent, and in the next incapable of a thought. So far then from the connection between mental phenomena, and the arrangement of matter in the animal structure being "constant" the ground of the argument of Priestley and other materialists; it is often visibly broken; for a perfect organization of the animal

remains after perception has become extinct.

In support of this argument, we may urge the representations of Scripture, upon that class of materialists who have not proceeded to the full length of denying its authority. Adam was formed out of the dust of the earth, the organism of his frame was therefore complete, before he became "a living soul." God breathed into him "the breath of lives," and whatever different persons may understand by that

inspiration it certainly was not an organizing operation. The man was first formed or organized, and then life was imparted. Before the animating breath was inspired, he was riot intelligent, because he lived not; yet the organization was complete before either life or the power of perception was imparted; thought did not arise out of his organic structure, as an effect from its cause.

The doctrine that mere organization is the cause of perception, &c, being

clearly untenable, we shall probably be told, that the subject sup-posed in the argument, is a living organized being. If so, then the proof that matter can think drawn from organization is given up, and another cause of the phenomenon of intelligence is introduced. This is Iife9 and the argument will be considerably altered. It will no longer be, as we have before quoted it from Dr. Priestley, "that the powers of sensation or perception and thought, never having been found but in

conjunction with a certain organized system of matter, the conclusion is that they depend upon such a system;" but that these powers not having been found but in conjunction with animal life, they depend upon that as their cause.

What then is life, which is thus exhibited as the cause of intelligence, and as the proof that matter is capable of perception and thought? In its largest and commonly received sense, it is that inherent activity which distinguishes

vegetable and animal bodies from the soils in which the former grow, and on which the latter tread. A vegetable is said to five, because it has motion within itself, and is capable of absorption, secretion, nutrition, growth, and the reproduction of its kind. With all this it exhibits no mental phenomena, no sensation, no consciousness, no volition, no reflection; in a word, it is utterly unintelligent. We have here a proof then as satisfactory as our argument from organization, that life, at

least life of any kind, is not the cause of intelligence, for in ten thousand instances we see it existing in bodies to which it imparts no mental properties at all.

If then it be said that the life intended as the cause of intelligence is not vegetable, but animal life, the next step in the inquiry is, in what the life of an animal differs from that of a vegetable; and if we go into the camp of the enemy himself, we shall find him laying it down, that to animals a double life

belongs, the organic and the animal, the former of which animals, and even man, has only in common with the vegetable. One modification of life, says Bichat, (upon whose scheme our modern materialists have modeled their arguments,) is common to vegetables and animals, the other peculiar to the latter. "Compare together two individuals, one taken from each of these kingdoms: one exists only within itself, has no other relations to external objects than those of nutrition; is born, grows,

and perishes, attached to the soil which received its germ. The other joins to this internal life, which it possesses in a still higher degree, an external life, which establishes numerous relations between it and the neighboring objects, unites its existence to that of other beings, and draws it near to, or removes it from them, according to its wants and fears."

(Recherches sur la vie et la mort.) This is only in other words to say, that there is one kind of life in man,

which, as in the vegetable, is the cause of growth, circulation, assimilation, nutrition, excretion, and similar functions; and another on which depend sensation, the passions, will, memory, and other attributes which we attribute to spirit. We have gained then by this distinction another step in the argument. There is a life common to animals and to vegetables. Whether this be simple mechanism or something more, matters nothing to the conclusion; it confers neither sensation, nor

volition, nor reason. That life in men, and in the inferior animals, which is common to them and to vegetables, called, by Bichat and his followers, organic life, is evidently not the cause of intelligence.

What then is that higher species of life called animal life, on which we are told our mental powers depend? And here the French materialist, whose notions have been so readily adopted into our own schools of physiology, shall speak for himself. "The functions of the

animal form two distinct classes. One of these consists of an habitual succession of assimilation and concretion, by which it is constantly transforming into its own substance the particles of other bodies, and then rejecting them when they have become useless. By the other he perceives surrounding objects; reflects on his sensations, performs voluntary motions under their influence, and generally communicates, by the voice, his pleasures or pains; his desires or fears." "The assembled

functions of the second class form the animal life"

This strange definition of life has been adopted by Lawrence, and other disciples of the French school of materialism; but its absurdity as a definition is obvious, and could only have been adopted as a veil of words to hide a conclusion fatal to the favorite system. So far from being a definition of life, it is no more than a description of the "functions" of a vital principle or power, whatever that power or

principle may be. Function is a manner in which any power develops itself, or as Lawrence, the disciple of Bichat, has properly expressed it, "a mode of action;" and to say that an assemblage of the modes in which anything acts, is that which acts, or "forms" that which acts, is the greatest possible trifling and folly.

But Bichat is not the only one of modern materialists who refuse honestly to pursue the inquiry,

"what is life?" when even affecting to describe or defend it. Cuvier, another

great authority in the same school, at one time says, that be life what it may, it cannot be what the vulgar suppose it, a particular principle. (Principe particulier.) In another place he acknowledges that life can proceed only from life. (La vie nai't que de la vie.) Then again he considers it an internal principle; (un principe interieur d'entretien et de reparation;) and last of all says, what Mr. Lawrence has since repeated verbatim, that life consists in the sum total of all the functions. (Il consiste dans

l'ensemble des functions qui servent a nourir le corps, c'est a dire la digestion, 1'absorption, la circulation, &c.) Thus he makes life a cause which owes its existence to its own operations, and consequently a cause which, had it not operated to produce itself, had never operated nor existed at all! (Vide Medical Review, Sept. 1822, Art. 1.) "It is truly pitiful," says a physiologist of other opinions, "to think of a man with so many endowments, natural and acquired, driven as if

blindfold by the fashion of the times, a contemptible vanity, or some wretched inclination, endeavoring to support with all his energy the extravagant idea that the phenomena of design and intelligence displayed in the form and structure of his species might have been the effects of some impulse or motion, or of some group of functions, as digestion, circulation, respiration, &c, which have accidentally happened to meet without any assignable cause to bring them together, to hold them together, or to direct

them." (Dr. Barclay on Life and Organization.)

These and many other examples are in proof, that the cause of vital properties cannot, we do not say be explained, but cannot even be indicated on the material system; and we are no nearer, for anything which these physiologists say, to any satisfactory account of that life which is peculiar to animals, and which has been distinguished from the organic life that is common to them and to vegetables. It is not the result of

organization, for that "is no living principle, no active cause."

"An organ is an instrument. Organization therefore is nothing more than a system of parts so constructed and arranged as to co-operate to one common purpose. It is an arrangement of instruments, and there must be something beyond to bring these instruments into action."

(Rennell's Remarks on Skepticism.) If life cannot therefore be organization or the effect of it, it is not

that inherent, mechanical, and chemical motion which is called life in vegetables, and which the physiologists have decided to be the same kind of life which they call organic in animals; for even the materialist acknowledges that to be a different species of life in animals, on which sensation, volition, and passion depend. What then is it? It is not a material substance; in that all agree. It is not the material effect of the material cause, organization; that has been shown to be absurd. It is

not that mechanical and chemical inherent motion which performs so many functions in vegetables and in animals, so far as they have it in common with them; for no sensation or other mental phenomena are allowed to result from these. It is therefore plainly no material cause and no effect of matter at all; for no other hypothesis remains but that which places its source in an immaterial subject, operating upon and by material organs. For, to quote from a writer just mentioned, "that there is

some invisible agent in every living organized system, seems to be an inference to which we are led almost irresistibly. When we see an animal starting from its sleep, contrary to the known laws of gravitation, without an external or elastic impulse, without the appearance of electricity, galvanism, magnetism, or chemical attraction: when we see it afterward moving its limbs in various directions, with different degrees of force and velocity, sometimes suspending and sometimes renewing the same

motions, at the sound of a word or the sight of a shadow, can we refrain a moment from thinking that the cause of these phenomena is internal, that it is something different from the body, and that the several bodily organs are nothing more than the mere instruments which it employs in its operations? Not instruments indeed that can be manufactured, purchased, or exchanged, or that can at pleasure be varied in form, position, number, proportion, or magnitude; not

instruments whose motions are dependent upon an external impulse, on gravity, elasticity, magnetism, galvanism, on electricity or chemical attraction; but instruments of a peculiar nature, instruments that grow, that are moved by the will, and which can be regulated and kept in repair by no agent but the one for which they were primarily destined; instruments so closely related to that agent, that they cannot be injured, handled or breathed upon, approached by cold, by wind, by rain, without

exciting in it certain sensations of pleasure or of pain; sensations which, if either unusual or excessive, are generally accompanied with joy or grief, hopes or alarms: instruments, in short, that exert so constant and powerful reaction on the agent that employs them, that they modify almost every phenomenon which it exhibits, and to such an extent, that no person can confidently say what would be the effect of its energies if deprived of instruments; or what would be the effect of its energies if furnished

with instruments of a different species, or if furnished with instruments of different materials, less dependent on external circumstances, and less subject to the laws of gross and inert matter." (Barclay an Life and Organization.) Life, then, whether organic or animal, is not the cause of intelligence, and thus all true reasoning upon these phenomena brings us to the philosophy of the Scriptures, that the presence of an immaterial soul with the body, is the source of animal life; and that the separation of the

soul from the body is that circumstance which causes death. (6) Farther proofs however are not wanting, that matter is incapable of thought, and that its various qualities are inconsistent with mental phenomena.

(6) The celebrated Hunter, "in searching for the principle of life, on the supposition that it was something visible, fruitlessly enough looked for it in the blood, the chyle, the brain, the lungs, and other parts of the body; but not finding it in

any of them exclusively, concluded that it must be a consequence of the union of the whole, and depend upon organism. But to this conclusion he could not long adhere, after observing that the composition of matter does not give life; and that a dead body may have all the composition it ever had. Last of all, he drew the true, or at least the candid conclusion, that he knew nothing about the matter" (Medico-Chirurgical Review, Sept. 1822.) This is the conclusion to which mere philosophy comes,

and the only one at which it can arrive, till it stoops to believe that there is true philosophy in the Scriptures.

"Extension is a universal quality of matter; being that cohesion and continuity of its parts by which a body occupies space. The idea of extension is gained by our external senses of sight and of touch. But thought is neither visible nor tangible, it occupies no external space, it has no contiguous or cohering parts. A mind enlarged by education and

science, a memory stored with the richest treasures of varied know ledge, occupies no more space than that of the meanest and most illiterate rustic.

"In body again we find a vis inertia, that is, a certain quality by which it resists any change in its present state. We know by experiment, that a body, when it has received an impulse, will persevere in a direct course and a uniform velocity, until its motion shall be either disturbed or retarded by some external power; and again, that,

being at rest, it will remain so for ever, unless motion shall have been communicated to it from without. Since matter therefore necessarily resists all change of its present state, its motion and its rest are purely passive; spontaneous motion, therefore, must have some other origin. Nor is this spontaneous motion to be attributed to the simple powers of life, for we have seen that in the life of vegetation there is no spontaneous motion; the plant has no power either to remove itself out of the

position in which it is fixed, or even to accelerate or retard the motion which takes place within it. Nor has man himself, in a sleep perfectly sound, the power of locomotion any more than a plant, nor any command over the various active processes which are going on within his own body. But when he is awake, he will rise from his resting place-if mere matter, whether living or dead were concerned, he would have remained there like a plant or a stone forever. He will walk forward-he will change his

course-he will stop. Can matter, even though endowed with the life of vegetation, perform any such acts as these? Here is motion fairly begun without any external impulse, and stopped without any external obstacle. The activity of a plant, on the contrary, is neither spontaneous nor locomotive; it is derived in regular succession from parent substances, and it can be stopped only by external obstacles, such as the disturbance of the organization. A mass even of living matter requires

something beyond its own powers to overcome the vis inertia which still distinguishes it, and to produce active and spontaneous motion.

"Hardness and impenetrability are qualities of matter; but no one of common sense, without a very palpable metaphor, could ever consider them as the properties of thought.

"There is another property of matter, which is, if possible, still more inconsistent with thought than any of the former, I

mean its divisibility. Let us take any material substance, the brain, the heart, or any other body; which we would have endowed with thought, and inquire of what is this substance composed. It is the aggregate of an indefinite number of separable and separate parts. Now the experience of what passes within our minds will inform us, that unity is essential to a thinking being. That consciousness which establishes the one individual being, which every man knows himself

to be, cannot, without a contradiction in terms, be separated, or divided. No man can think in two separate places at the same time: nor, again, is his consciousness made up of a number of separate consciousnesses; as the solidity, the color, and motion of the whole body is made up of the distinct solidities, colors, and motions of its parts. As a thinking and a conscious being, then, man must be essentially one. As a partaker of the life of vegetation he is separable into ten thousand different

parts. If then it is the brain of a man which is conscious and thinks, his consciousness and thought must be made up of as many separate parts as there are particles in its material substance, which is contrary to common sense and experience. Whatever, therefore, our thought may be, or in whatever it may reside, it is essentially indivisible; and, therefore, wholly inconsistent with the divisibility of a material substance.

"From every quality, therefore, of matter, with which we are acquainted, we shall be warranted in concluding, that without a contradiction in terms, it cannot be pronounced capable of thought.

A thinking substance may be combined with a stone, a tree, or an animal body; but not one of the three can of itself become a thinking being." (Rennell on Skepticism.)

"The notions we annex to the words, matter and mind, as is well remarked by Dr. Reid, are merely

relative. If I am asked, what I mean by matter? I can only explain myself by saying, it is that which is extended, figured, colored, movable, hard or soft, rough or smooth, hot or cold;-

that is, I can define it in no other way than by enumerating its sensible qualities. It is not matter or body which I perceive by my senses; but only extension, figure, color, and certain other qualities, which the constitution of my nature leads me to refer to something which is

extended, figured, and colored. The case is precisely similar with respect to mind. We are not immediately conscious of its existence, but we are conscious of sensation, thought, and volition; operations which imply the existence of something which feels, thinks, and wills. Every man too is impressed with an irresistible conviction, that all these sensations, thoughts, and volitions, belong to one and the same being; to that being, which he calls himself; a being which he is led, by the

constitution of his nature, to consider as something distinct from his body, and as not liable to be impaired by the loss or mutilation of any of his organs.

"From these considerations, it appears that we have the same evidence for the existence of mind, that we have for the existence of body; nay, if there be any difference between the two cases, that we have stronger evidence for it; inasmuch as the one is suggested to us by the subjects of our own consciousness, and the

other merely by the objects of our perceptions." (Stewards Essays.) Farther observations on the immateriality of the human soul will be adduced in their proper place. The reason why the preceding argument on this subject has been here introduced, is not only that the spirituality of the Divine nature might be established by proving that intelligence is not a material attribute; but to keep in view the connection between the spirituality of God, and that of man, who was made

in his image; and to show the relation which also exists between the doctrine of the materialism of the human soul, and absolute Atheism, and thus to hold out a warning against such speculations. There is no middle course in fact, though one may be effected. If we materialize man, we must materialize God, or, in other words, deny a First Cause, one of whose essential attributes is intelligence. It is then of little consequence what scheme of Atheism is adopted. On the other hand, if we allow

spirituality to God, it follows as a necessary corollary, that we must allow it to man. These doctrines stand or fall together.

On a subject which arises out of the foregoing discussion, a single observation will be sufficient.

It is granted that, on the premises laid down, not only must an immaterial principle be allowed to man, but to all animals possessed of volition; and few, perhaps none, are found without this

property. But though this has often been urged as an objection, it can cost the believer in revelation nothing to admit it. It strengthens, and does not weaken his argument; and it is perfectly in accordance with Scripture, which speaks of "the soul of a beast," as well as of "the soul of man." Vastly, nay, we might say, infinitely different are they in the class and degree of their powers, though of the same spiritual essence; but they have both properties which cannot be attributed to matter. It does not,

however, follow that they are immortal, because they are immaterial. The truth is, that God only hath independent immortality, because he only is self-existent, and neither human nor brute souls are of necessity immortal. God hath given this privilege to man, not by a necessity of nature, which would be incompatible with dependence, but by his own will, and the continuance of his sustaining power. But he seems to have denied it to the inferior animals, and according to the language

of Scripture, "the spirit of a beast goeth down ward." The doctrine of the natural immortality of man, will, however, be considered in its proper place.

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23 ATTRIBUTES OF GOD - ETERNITY, OMNIPOTENCE, UBIQUITY

From the Scriptures we have learned, that there is one God, the Creator of all things, and consequently living and intelligent. The demonstrations of this

truth, which surround us in the works of nature, have been also adverted to. By the same sacred revelations we have also been taught, that, as to the Divine essence, God is a Spirit; and in the farther manifestations they have made of him, we learn, that as all things were made by him, he was before all things: that their being is dependent, his independent; that he is eminently being, according to his own peculiar appellation "I AM;" self-existent, and eternal. In the Scripture doctrine of God,

we, however, not only find it asserted that God had no beginning, but that he shall have no end. Eternity ad partem post is ascribed to him, for in the most absolute sense, he hath "immortality" and he "only" hath it, by virtue of the inherent perfection of his nature. It is this which completes those sublime and impressive views of the eternity of God, with which the revelation he has been pleased to make of himself abounds. "From everlasting to everlasting thou art God. Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth;

and the heavens are the work of thine hand. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure; yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end." He "inhabiteth eternity," fills and occupies the whole round of boundless duration, and "is the first and the last"

In these representations of the eternal existence and absolute immortality of the Divine Being, something

more than the mere idea of infinite duration is conveyed. No creature can, without contradiction, be supposed to have been from eternity; but even a creature may be supposed to continue to exist forever, in as strict a sense as God himself will continue to exist forever. Its existence, however, being originally dependent and derived, must continue so. It is not, so to speak, in its nature to live, or it would never have been non-existent; and what it has not from itself, it has received, and must through every moment of

actual existence receive from its Maker. But the very phrase in which the Scriptures speak of the eternity of God, suggests a meaning deeper than that of mere duration. They contrast the stability of the Divine existence with the vanishing and changing nature of all his works, and represent them as reposing upon him for support, while he not only depends not upon any, but rests upon himself. He lives by virtue of his nature, and is essentially unchangeable. For to the nature of that which exists without cause,

life must be essential. In him who is "the fountain of life," there can be no principle of decay. There can be no desire to cease to be, in him who is perfectly blessed, because of the unbounded excellence of his nature. To him existence must be the source of infinite enjoyment, both from the contemplation of his own designs, and the manifestation of his glory, purity, and benevolence, to the intelligent creatures he has made to know and to be beatified by such discoveries and benefits.

No external power can control, or in any way affect his felicity, his perfection or his being. Such are the depths of glory and peculiarity into which the Divine eternity, as stated in the Scriptures, leads the wondering mind; and of which the wisest of heathens, who ascribed immortality to one, or to many gods, had no conception. They were ever fancying something out of God, as the cause of their immortal being; fate, or external necessity, or some similar and vague notion, which obscured, as to

them, one of the peculiar glories of the "eternal power and Godhead," who of and from his own essential nature, is, and was, and shall be.

Some apprehensions of this great truth are seen in the sayings of a few of the Greek sages, though much obscured by their other notions. Indeed, that appropriate name of God, so venerated among the Jews, the nomen tetragrammaton, which we render Jehovah, was known among the heathens to be the name under

which the Jews worshipped the supreme God; and "from this Divine name," says Parkhurst, sub voce, "the ancient Greeks had their Ie Ie in their invocation of the gods. (7) It expresses not the attributes, but the essence of God, which was the reason why the Jews deemed it ineffable. The Septuagint translators preserved the same idea in the word Kurios, by which they translated it, from chiro, sum, I am. This word is said by critics not to be classically used to signify God, which would mark the

peculiarity of this appellation in the Septuagmt version more strongly, and convey something of the great idea of the self, or absolute existence ascribed to the Divine nature in the Hebrew Scriptures, to those of the heathen philosophers who met with that translation. That it could not be passed over unnoticed, we may gather from St. Hilary, who says, that before his conversion to Christianity, meeting with this appellation of God in the Pentateuch, he was struck with

admiration, nothing being so proper to God as to be. Among the Jews, however, the import of this stupendous name was preserved unimpaired by metaphysical speculations. It was registered in their sacred books: from the fullness of its meaning the loftiest thoughts are seen to spring up in the minds of the prophets, which amplify with an awful and mysterious grandeur their descriptions of his peculiar glories, in contrast with the vain gods of the heathen, and with every actual

existence, however exalted, in heaven and in earth.

(7) A curious instance of the transmission of this name, and one of the peculiarities of the Hebrew faith, even into China, is mentioned in the following extract of "A Memoir of Lao-tseu, a Chinese philosopher, who flourished in the sixth century before our era, and who professed the opinions ascribed to Plato and to Pythagoras." (By M. Abel Remusat.) - "The metaphysics of Lao-tseu have many other

remarkable features, which I have endeavored to develops in my memoir, and which, for various reasons, I am obliged to pass over in silence. How, in fact, should I give an idea of those lofty abstractions, of those inextricable subtleties, in which the oriental imagination disports and goes astray? It will suffice to say here, that the opinions of the Chinese philosopher on the origin and constitution of the universe, have neither ridiculous fables nor offensive absurdities; that

they bear the stamp of a noble and elevated mind; and that, in the sublime reveries which distinguish them, they exhibit a striking and incontestable conformity with the doctrine which was professed a little later by the schools of Pythagoras and Plato. Like the Pythagoreans and the Stoics, our author admits, as the First Cause, Reason, an ineffable, uncreated Being, that is the type of the universe, and has no type but itself. Like Pythagoras, he takes human souls to be

emanations of the ethereal substance, which are reunited with it after death; and, like Plato, he refuses to the wicked the faculty of returning into the bosom of the Universal Soul. Like Pythagoras, he gives to the first principles of things the names of numbers, and his cosmogony is, in some degree, algebraically. He attaches the chain of beings to that which he calls One, then to Two, then to Three, which have made all things. The divine Plato, who had adopted this mysterious dogma, seems to be afraid of revealing it

to the profane. He envelopes it in clouds in his famous letter to the three friends; he teaches it to Dionysius of Syracuse; but by enigmas, as he says himself, lest his tablets falling into the hands of some stranger they should be read and understood. Perhaps the recollection of the recent death of Socrates imposed this reserve upon him. Lao-tseu does not make use of these indirect ways; and what is most clear in his book is, that a Triune Being formed the universe. To complete the singularity, he gives to

his being a Hebrew name hardly changed, the very name which in our book designates him, who was, and is, and shall be. This last circumstance confirms all that the tradition indicated of a journey to the west, and leaves no doubt of the origin of his doctrine.

Probably he received it either from the Jews of the ten tribes, whom the conquest of Sulmanazan had just dispersed throughout Asia, or from the apostles of some Phenician sect, to which

those philosophers also belonged, who were the masters and precursors of Pythagoras and Plato."

On this subject of the eternal duration of the Divine Being, many have held a metaphysical refinement. "The eternal existence of God," it is said, "is not to be considered as successive; the ideas we gain from time are not to be allowed in our conceptions of his duration. As he fills all space with his immensity, he fills all duration with his eternity; and with him

eternity is nunc stans, a permanent now, incapable of the relations of past, present, and future." Such, certainly, is not the view given us of this mysterious subject in the Scriptures; and if it should be said that they speak popularly, and are accommodated to the infirmity of the thoughts of the body of mankind, we may reply, that philosophy has not, with all its boasting of superior light, carried our views on this attribute of the Divine nature at all beyond the revelation; and, in attempting it, has only

obscured the conceptions of its disciples. "Filling duration with his eternity" is a phrase without any meaning: "For how can any man conceive a permanent instant, which co-exists with a perpetually flowing duration? One might as well apprehend a mathematical point co-extended with a line, a surface, and all dimensions." (Abernethy's Sermons.) As this notion has, however, been made the basis of some opinions, which will be remarked upon in their proper place,

it may be proper briefly to examine it.

Whether we get our idea of time from the motion of bodies without us, or from the consciousness of the succession of our own ideas, or both, is not important to this inquiry. Time, in our conceptions, is divisible. The artificial divisions are years, months, days, minutes, seconds, &c.

We can conceive of yet smaller portions of duration, and whether we have given to them artificial names or not, we

can conceive no otherwise of duration, than continuance of being, estimated as to degree, by this artificial admeasurements, and therefore as substantially answering to it. It is not denied but that duration is something distinct from these its artificial measures; yet of this every man's consciousness will assure him, that we can form no idea of duration except in this successive manner. But we are told, that the eternity of God is a fixed eternal now, from which all ideas of

succession, of past and future, are to be excluded; and we are called upon to conceive of eternal duration without reference to past or future, and to the exclusion of the idea of that flow under which we conceive of time. The proper abstract idea of duration is, however, simple continuance of being, without any reference to the exact degree or extent of it, because in no other way can it be equally applicable to all the substances of which it is the attribute. It may be finite or infinite,

momentary or eternal, but that depends upon the substance of which it is the quality, and not upon its own nature. Our own observation and experience teach us how to apply it to ourselves. As to us, duration is dependent and finite; as to God, it is infinite; but in both cases the originality or dependence, the finite or infinity of it, arises not out of the nature of duration itself, but out of other qualities of the subjects respectively.

Duration, then, as applied to God, is no more than an extension of the idea as applied to ourselves; and to exhort us to conceive of it as something essentially different, is to require us to conceive what is in. conceivable. It is to demand of us to think without ideas. Duration is continuance of existence, continuance of existence is capable of being longer or shorter, and hence necessarily arises the idea of the succession of the minutest points of duration into which we can conceive it divided. Beyond this the

mind cannot go, it forms the idea of duration no other way; and if what we call duration be anything different from this in God, it is not duration, properly so called, according to human ideas; it is something else, for which there is no name among men, because there is no idea, and therefore it is impossible to reason about it As long as metaphysicians use the term, they must take the idea: if they spurn the idea, they have no right to the term, and ought at once to confess that they can go no

farther. Dr. Cudworth defines infinity of duration to be nothing else but perfection, as including in it necessary existence and immutability. This, it is true, is as much a definition of the moon, as of infinity of duration; but it is valuable, as it shows that, in the view of this great man, though an advocate of the nunc stans, the standing now of eternity, we must abandon the term duration, if we give up the only idea under which it can be conceived.

It follows from this, therefore, that either we must apply the term duration to the Divine Being in the same sense in which we apply it to creatures, with the extension of the idea to a duration which has no bounds and limits, or blot it out of our creeds, as a word to which our minds, with all the aid they may derive from the labors of metaphysicians, can attach no meaning. The only notion which has the appearance of an objection to this successive duration, as applied to him, appears

wholly to arise from confounding two very distinct things; succession in the duration, and change in the substance. Dr. Cudworth appears to have fallen into this error. He speaks of the duration of an imperfect nature, as sliding from the present to the future, expecting something of itself which is not yet in being, and of a perfect nature being essentially immutable, having a permanent and unchanging duration, never losing anything of itself once present, nor yet running forward to meet

something of itself which is not yet in being. Now, though this is a good description of a perfect and immutable nature, it is no description at all of an eternally-enduring nature. Duration implies no loss in the substance of any being, nor addition to it. A perfect nature never loses anything of itself, nor expects more of itself than is possessed; but this does not arise from the attribute of its duration, however that attribute may be conceived of, but from its perfection, and consequent immutability. These

attributes do not flow from the duration, but the extent of the duration from them. The argument is clearly good for nothing, unless it could be proved, that successive duration necessarily implies change in the nature; but that is contradicted by the experience of finite beings-their natures are not at all determined by their duration, but their duration by their natures; and they exist for a moment, or for ages, according to the nature which their Maker has impressed upon them. If it

be said that, at least, successive duration imports that a being loses past duration, and expects the arrival of future existence, we reply, that this is no imperfection at all. Even finite creatures do not feel it to be an imperfection to have existed, and to look for continued and interminable being. It is true, with the past, we lose knowledge and pleasure; and expecting in all future periods increase of knowledge and happiness, we are reminded by that of our present imperfection;

but this imperfection does not arise from our successive and flowing duration, and we never refer it to that. It is not the past which takes away our knowledge and pleasure; nor future duration, simply considered, which will confer the increase of both. Our imperfections arise out of the essential nature of our being, not out of the manner in which our being is continued. It is not the flow of our duration, but the flow of our natures which produces these effects. On the contrary, we think that the idea of our

successive duration, that is, of continuance, is an excellency, and not a defect. Let all ideas of continuance be banished from the mind, let these be to us a nunc semper stans, during the whole of our being, and we appear to gain nothing- our pleasures surely are not diminished by the idea of long continuance being added to present enjoyment; that they have been, and still remain, and will continue, on the contrary, greatly heightens them. Without the idea of a flowing duration, we could have no

such measure of the continuance of our pleasures, and this we should consider an abatement of our happiness. What is so obvious an excellency in the spirit of man, and in angelic natures, can never be thought an imperfection in God, when joined with a nature essentially perfect and immutable.

But it may be said, that eternal duration, considered as successive, is only an artificial manner of measuring, and conceiving of duration; and is no more

eternal duration itself than minutes and moments, the artificial measures of time, are time itself. Were this granted, the question would still be, whether there is anything in duration, considered generally, or in time considered specially, which corresponds to these artificial methods of measuring, and conceiving of them.

The ocean is measured by leagues; but the extension of the ocean, and the measure of it, are distinct. They, nevertheless, answer

to each other Leagues are the nominal divisions of an extended surface, but there is a real extension, which answers to the artificial conception and admeasurements of it. In like manner, days, and hours, and moments, are the measures of time; but there is either something in time which answers to these measures, or not only the measure, but the thing itself is artificial-an imaginary creation. If any man will contend, that the period of duration which we call time, is nothing, no farther dispute can be held

with him, and he may be left to deny also the existence of matter, and to enjoy his philosophic revel in an ideal world. We apply the same argument to duration generally, whether finite or infinite. Minutes and moments, or smaller portions, for which we have no name, may be artificial, adopted to aid our conceptions; but conceptions of what? Not of any thing standing still, but of something going on.

Of duration we have no other conception; and if there be nothing in nature

which answers to this conception, then is duration itself imaginary, and we discourse about nothing. If the duration of the Divine Being admits not of past, present, and future, one of these two consequences must follow, - that no such attribute as that of eternity belongs to him, - or that there is no power in the human mind to conceive of it. In either case the Scriptures are greatly impugned; for "He who was, and is, and is to come," is a revelation of the eternity of God, which is then in no sense true. It is

not true if used literally; and it is as little so if the language be figurative, for the figure rests on no basis, it illustrates nothing, it misleads.

God is OMNIPOTENT: Of this attribute also we have the most ample revelation, and in the most impressive and sublime language. From the annunciation in the Scriptures of a Divine existence who was "in the beginning" before all things, the very first step is the display of his almighty power in the creation out of nothing, and the

immediate arrangement in order and perfection, of the "heaven and the earth;" by which is meant not this globe only with its atmosphere, or even with its own celestial system, but the universe itself; for "he made the stars also" We are thus placed at once in the presence of an agent of unbounded power, "the strict and correct conclusion being, that a power which could create such a world as this, must be beyond all comparison, greater than any which we experience in ourselves, than any which we observe

in other visible agents, greater also than any which we can want for our individual protection and preservation, in the Being upon whom we depend; a power likewise to which we are not authorized by our observation or knowledge to assign any limits of space or duration." (Paley.) That the sacred writers should so frequently dwell upon the omnipotence of God has an important reason which arises out of the very design of that revelation which they were the instruments of communicating to

mankind. Men were to be reminded of their obligations to obedience, and God is therefore constantly exhibited as the Creator, the Preserver, and Lord of all things. His reverent worship and fear was to be enjoined upon them, and by the manifestation of his works the veil was withdrawn from his glory and majesty. Idolatry was to be checked and reproved, and the true God was thus placed in contrast with the limited and powerless gods of the heathen. "Among the gods of the nations, is there no

God like unto thee, neither are there any works like thy works." Finally, he was to be exhibited as the object of trust to creatures, constantly reminded by experience of their own infirmity and dependence, and to whom it was essential to know, that his power was absolute, unlimited, and irresistible.

In the revelation which was thus designed to awe and control the bad, and to afford strength of mind and consolation to the good under all circumstances, the omnipotence of God is

therefore placed in a great variety of impressive views, and connected with the most striking illustrations.

It is presented by the fact of creation, the creation of beings out of nothing, which itself, though it had been confined to a single object, however minute, exceeds finite comprehension, and overwhelms the faculties. This with God required no effort - "He spake and it was done, he commanded and it stood fast." The vastness and variety of his

works enlarge the conception.

"The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handy work." "He spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea; he maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south; he doeth great things, past finding out, yea, and wonders without number. He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing. He bindeth up the

waters in the thick clouds, and the cloud is not rent under them; he hath compassed the waters with bounds until the day and night come to an end." The ease with which he sustains, orders, and controls the most powerful and unruly of the elements, presents his omnipotence under an aspect of ineffable dignity and majesty. "By him all things consist." He brake up for the sea "a decreed place, and set bars and doors, and said, Hitherto shalt thou come and no farther, and here shall thy proud waves be

stayed." "He looketh to the end of the earth, and seeth under the whole heaven, to make the weight for the winds, to weigh the waters by measure, to make a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder."

"Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, meted out heaven with a span, comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the winds in a balance?" The descriptions of the Divine power are often

terrible. "The pillars of heaven tremble, and are astonished at his reproof; he divideth the sea by his power." "He removeth the mountains, and they know it not; he overturneth them in his anger, he shaketh the earth out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble; he commandeth the sun and it riseth not, and sealeth up the stars." The same absolute subjection of creatures to his dominion is seen among the intelligent inhabitants of the material universe, and angels, men the most exalted, and evil spirits, are

swayed with as much ease as the least resistless elements. "He maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire." They veil their faces before his throne, and acknowledge themselves his servants. "It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers," "as the dust of the balance, less than nothing and vanity." "He bringeth princes to nothing." "He setteth up one and putteth down another," "for the kingdom is the Lord's, and he is

governor among the nations." "The angels that sinned, he cast down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment." The closing scenes of this world complete these transcendent conceptions of the majesty and power of God. The dead of all ages shall rise from their graves at his voice; and the sea shall give up the dead which are in it. Before his face heaven and earth flee away, the stars fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven are shaken. The

dead, small and great, stand before God, and are divided as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; the wicked go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.

Of these amazing views of the omnipotence of God, spread almost through every page of the Scripture, the power lies in their truth. They are not eastern exaggerations, mistaken for sublimity. Everything in nature answers to them, and renews from age to age the energy of the

impression which they cannot but make upon the reflecting mind. The order of the astral revolutions indicates the constant presence of an invisible but incomprehensible power:- the seas hurl the weight of their billows upon the rising shores, but everywhere find a "bound fixed by a perpetual decree;" - the tides reach their height; if they flowed on for a few hours, the earth would change places with the bed of the sea; but under an invisible control they become refluent.

"He toucheth the mountains and they smoke," is not mere imagery. Every volcano is a testimony of that truth to nature which we find in the Scriptures; and earthquakes teach, that before him,

"the pillars of the world tremble." Men collected into armies, and populous nations, give us vast ideas of human power; but let an army be placed amidst the sand storms and burning winds of the desert, as, in the east, has frequently happened' or before "his

frost" as in our own day, in Russia, where one of the mightiest armaments was seen retreating before, or perishing under an unexpected visitation of snow and storm; or let the utterly helpless state of a populous country which has been visited by famine, or by a resistless pestilential disease, be reflected upon, and it is no figure of speech to say, that "all nations are before him less than nothing and vanity "

Nor in reviewing this doctrine of Scripture, ought

the fine practical uses made of the omnipotence of God, by the sacred writers, to be overlooked. In them there is nothing said for the display of knowledge, as, too often, in heathen writers; no speculation without a moral subservient to it, and that by evident design. To excite and keep alive in man the fear and worship of God, and to bring him to a felicitous confidence in that almighty power which pervades and controls all things, we have observed, are the reasons for those ample displays of the

omnipotence of God, which roll through the sacred volume with a sublimity that inspiration only could supply. "Declare his glory among the heathen, his marvelous works among all nations; for great is the Lord and greatly to be praised. Glory and honor are in his presence, and strength and gladness in his place. Give unto the Lord, ye kindreds of the people, give unto the Lord glory and strength; give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name. The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The

Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? If God be for us, who then can be against us? Our help standeth in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth. What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee." Thus, as one observes,

"our natural fears, of which we must have many, remit us to God, and remind us, since we know what God is, to lay hold on his almighty power."

Ample however as are the views afforded us in Scripture of the power of

God, we are not to consider the subject as bounded by them. As when the Scriptures declare the eternity of God, they declare it so as to unveil to us something of that fearful peculiarity of the Divine nature, that he is the fountain of being to himself, and that he is eternal, because he is the "I AM;" so we are taught not to measure his omnipotence by the actual displays of it which have been made. They are the manifestations of the principle, but not the measure of its capacity;

and should we resort to the discoveries of modern philosophy, which, by the help of instruments, has so greatly enlarged the known boundaries of the visible universe, and add to the stars, visible to the naked eye, new exhibitions of the Divine power in those nebulous appearances of the heavens which are resolvable into myriads of distinct celestial luminaries, whose immense distances commingle their light before it reaches our eyes; we thus almost infinitely expand the circle of created

existence, and enter upon a formerly unknown and overwhelming range of Divine operation; but we are still reminded, that his power is truly almighty and measureless - "Lo, all these are parts of his ways, but how little a portion is known of him, and the thunder of his power who can understand?" It is a mighty conception to think of a power from which all other power is derived, and to which it is subordinate; which nothing can oppose; which can beat down and annihilate all other powers whatever; a power which

operates in the most perfect manner; at once, in an instant, with the utmost ease: but the Scriptures lead us to the contemplation of greater depths, and those unfathomable. The omnipotence of God is inconceivable and boundless. It arises from the infinite perfection of God, that his power can never be actually exhausted; and in every imaginable instant in eternity, that inexhaustible power of God can, if it please him, be adding either more creatures to

those in existence, or greater perfection to them; since "it belongs to self existent being, to be always full and communicative, and to the communicated, contingent being, to be ever empty and craving." (Howe.)

One limitation only we can conceive, which however detracts nothing from this perfection of the Divine nature.

"Where things in themselves imply a contradiction, as that a body may be extended and not extended, in a place

and not in a place, at the same time; such things, I say, cannot be done by God, because contradictions are impossible in their own nature: nor is it any derogation from the Divine power to say, they cannot be done; for as the object of the understanding, of the eye, and the ear, is that which is intelligible, visible, and audible; so the object of power must be that which is possible; and as it is no prejudice to the most perfect understanding, or sight, or hearing, that it does not understand what

is not intelligible, or see what is not visible, or hear what is not audible; so neither is it any diminution to the most perfect power, that it does not do what is not possible. (Bishop Wilkins.) In like manner, God cannot do anything that is repugnant to his other perfections: he cannot lie, nor deceive, nor deny himself; for this would be injurious to his truth. He cannot love sin, nor punish innocence; for this would destroy his holiness and goodness: and therefore to ascribe a power to him that is

inconsistent with the rectitude of his nature, is not to magnify, but debase him; for all unrighteousness is weakness, a defection from right reason, a deviation from the perfect rule of action, and arises from a defect of goodness and power. In a word, since all the attributes of God are essentially the same, a power in him which tends to destroy any other attribute of the Divine nature, must be a power destructive of itself. Well therefore may we conclude him absolutely omnipotent,

who, by being able to effect all things consistent with his perfections, showeth infinite ability, and by not being able to do anything repugnant to the same perfections, demonstrates himself subject to no infirmity." (Pearson on the Creed.)

Nothing certainly in the finest writings of antiquity, were all their best thoughts collected as to the majesty and power of God, can bear any comparison to the views thus presented to us by Divine revelation. Were we to forget for a moment,

what is the fact, that their noblest notions stand connected with fancies and vain speculations which deprive them of their force, their thought never rises so high, the current of it is broken, the round of lofty conception is not completed; and, unconnected as their views of Divine power were with the eternal destiny of man, and the very reason of creation, we never hear in them, as in the Scriptures, "the thunder of his power." One of the best specimens of heathen devotion is given below in the hymn of

Cleanthes the Stoic; and, though noble and just, it sinks infinitely in the comparison.

"Hail, O Jupiter, most glorious of the immortals, invoked under many names, always most powerful, the first ruler of nature, whose law governs all things, - hail! for to address thee is permitted to all mortals. - For our race we have from thee; we mortals who creep upon the ground, receiving only the echo of thy voice. I therefore, I will celebrate thee, and will always sing

thy power. All this universe rolling round the earth, obeys thee wherever thou guidest, and willingly is governed by thee. So vehement, so fiery, so immortal is the thunder which thou boldest subservient in thy unshaken hands; for, by the stroke of this, all nature was rooted; by this, thou directest the common reason which pervades all things, mixed with the greater and lesser luminaries; so great a king art thou, supreme through all; nor does any work take place without thee on the

earth, nor in the ethereal sky, nor in the sea, except what the bad perform in their own folly. But do thou, O Jupiter, giver of all blessings, dwelling in the clouds, ruler of the thunder, defend mortals from dismal misfortune; which dispel, O Father, from the soul, and grant it to attain that judgment, trusting to which thou governest all things with justice; that, being honoured, we may repay thee with honor, singing continually thy works, as becomes a mortal; since there is no greater need to

men or gods, than always to celebrate justly the universal law."

The omnipresence or ubiquity of God, is another doctrine of Scripture; and it is corroborated by facts obvious to all reflecting beings, though to us, and perhaps to all finite minds, the mode is incomprehensible. The statement of this doctrine in the inspired records, like that of all the other attributes of God, is made in their own peculiar tone and emphasis of majesty and sublimity.

"Whither shall I go from thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up to heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there; if I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. - Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? Do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord? Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? -Thus saith the Lord, behold heaven is my

throne, and the earth is my footstool. - Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee. - Though he dig into hell, thence shall my hand take him; though he climb up into heaven, thence will I bring him down; and though he hide himself in the top of Carmel, I will search and take him out from thence. - In him we live, and move, and have our being. - He filleth all things."

Some striking passages on the ubiquity of the Divine presence may be found in

the writings of some of the Greek philosophers, arising out of this notion, that God was the soul of the world; but their very connection with this speculation, notwithstanding the imposing phrase occasionally adopted, strikingly marks the difference between their most exalted views, and those of the Hebrew prophets on this subject. "To a large proportion of those who hold a distinguished rank among the ancient Theistical philosophers, the idea of the personality of the Deity

was in a great measure unknown. The Deity by them was considered, riot so much an intelligent being as an animating power, diffused throughout the world, and was introduced into their speculative system to account for the motion of that passive mass of matter, which was supposed coeval, and indeed coexistent with himself." (Sumner's Records of the Creation.) These defective notions are confessed by Gibbon, a writer not disposed to

undervalue their attainments.

"The philosophers of Greece deduced their morals from the nature of man, rather than from that of God. They meditated, however, on the Divine nature, as a very curious and important speculation; and in the profound inquiry, they displayed the strength and weakness of the human understanding. Of the four most considerable sects, the Stoics and the Platonicians endeavored to reconcile the jarring interests of reason

and piety. They have left us the most sublime proofs of the existence and perfections of the First Cause; but as it was impossible for them to conceive the creation of matter, the workman, in the Stoic philosophy, was not sufficiently distinguished from the work; while on the contrary, the spiritual God of Plato and his disciples resembled more an idea than a substance." (Decline and Fall, &c.)

Similar errors have been revived in the infidel

philosophy of modern time, from Spinoza down to the latter offspring of the German and French schools. The same remark applies also to the oriental philosophy, which, as before remarked, presents at this day a perfect view of the boasted wisdom of ancient Greece, which was "brought to naught" by "the foolishness" of apostolic preaching. But in the Scriptures there is nothing confused in the doctrine of the Divine ubiquity.

God is everywhere, but he is not everything. All things

have their being in him, but he is distinct from all things; he fills the universe, but is not mingled with it. He is the intelligence which guides, and the power which sustains, but his personality is preserved, and he is independent of the works of his hands, however vast and noble. So far is his presence from being bounded by the universe itself, that, as in the passage above quoted from the Psalms, we are taught that were it possible for us to wing our way into the immeasurable depths and breadths of space, God

would there surround us, in as absolute a sense as that in which he is said to be about our bed and our path in that part of the world where his will has placed us.

On this as on all similar subjects, the Scriptures use terms which are taken in their common sense acceptation among mankind; and though the vanity of the human mind disposes many to seek a philosophy in the doctrine thus announced deeper than that which its popular terms convey, we are

bound to conclude, if we would pay but a common respect to an admitted revelation, that where no manifest figure of speech occurs, the truth of the doctrine lies in the tenor of the terms by which it is expressed. Otherwise there would be no revelation, I do not say, of the modus, for that is confessedly incomprehensible; but of the fact. In the case before us, the terms presence, and place, are used according to common notions, and must be so taken, if the Scriptures are intelligible. Metaphysical refinements

are not Scriptural doctrines, when they give to the terms chosen by the Holy Spirit an acceptation out of their general and proper use, and make them the signs of a perfectly distinct class of ideas; if indeed all distinctness of idea is not lost in the attempt. It is therefore in the popular, and just because Scriptural, manner, that we are to conceive of the omnipresence of God.

"If we reflect upon ourselves we may observe that we fill but a small

space, and that our knowledge or power reaches but a little way. We can act at one time in one place only, and the sphere of our influence is narrow at largest. Would we be witnesses to what is done at any distance from us, or exert there our active powers, we must remove ourselves thither. For this reason we are necessarily ignorant of a thousand things which pass around or, incapable of attending and managing any great variety of affairs, or performing at the same time any number of

actions, for our own good, or for the benefit of others.

"Although we feel this to be the present condition of our being, and the limited state of our intelligent and active powers, yet we can easily conceive, there may exist beings more perfect, and whose presence may extend far and wide. Any one of whom present in, what to us are, various places, at the same time, may know at once what is done in all these, and act in all of them; and thus be able to regard and direct a variety of affairs at the

same instant. And who farther being qualified, by the purity and activity of their nature, to pass from one place to an other with great ease and swiftness, may thus fill a large sphere of action, direct a great variety of affairs, confer a great number of benefits, and observe a multitude of actions at the same time, or in so swift a succession, as to us would appear but one instant. Thus perfect we may easily believe the angels of God.

"We can farther conceive this extent of presence, and

of ability for knowledge and action, to admit of degrees of ascending perfection approaching to infinite. And when we have thus raised our thoughts to the idea of a being, who is not only present throughout a large empire, but throughout our world: and not only in every part of our world, but in every part of all the numberless suns and worlds which roll in the starry heavens-who is not only able to enliven and actuate the plants, animals, and men who live upon this globe, but countless varieties of

creatures everywhere in an immense universe-yea, whose presence is not confined to the universe, immeasurable as that is by any finite mind, but who is present everywhere in infinite space; and who is therefore able to create still new worlds and fill them with proper inhabitants, attend, supply, and govern them all-when we have thus gradually raised and enlarged our conceptions, we have the best idea we can form, of the universal presence of the great Jehovah, who filleth heaven and earth. There is

no part of the universe, no portion of space uninhabited by God, none wherein this Being of perfect power, wisdom, and benevolence is not essentially present. Could we with the swiftness of a sunbeam dart ourselves beyond the limits of the creation, and for ages continue our progress in infinite space, we should still be surrounded with the Divine presence; nor ever be able to reach that space where God is not.

"His presence also penetrates every part of our

world; the most solid parts of the earth cannot exclude it; for it pierces as easily the center of the globe, as the empty air. All creatures live and move, and have their being in him. And the inmost recesses of the human heart can no more exclude his presence, or conceal a thought from his knowledge, than the deepest caverns of the earth." (Amory's Sermons.)

The illustrations and confirmatory proofs of this doctrine which the material world furnishes, are numerous and striking.

"It is a most evident and acknowledged truth that a being cannot act where it is not; if therefore actions and effects, which manifest the highest wisdom, power, and goodness in the author of them, are continually produced everywhere, the author of these actions, or God, must be continually present with us, and wherever he thus acts. The matter which composes the world is evidently lifeless and thoughtless; it must therefore be incapable of moving itself, or designing or producing any effects which require wisdom or

power. The matter of our world, or the small parts which constitute the air, the earth, and the waters, is yet continually moved, so as to produce effects of this kind; such are the innumerable herbs, and trees, and fruits which adorn the earth, and support the countless millions of creatures who inhabit it. There must therefore be constantly present, all over the earth, a most wise, mighty, and good being, the author and director of these motions.

"We cannot, it is true, see him with our bodily eyes, because he is a pure Spirit; yet this is not any proof that he is not present. A judicious discourse, a series of kind actions, convince us of the presence of a friend, a person of prudence and benevolence. We cannot see the present mind, the seat and principle of these qualities; yet the constant regular motion of the tongue, the hand, and the whole body, (which are the instruments of our souls, as the material universe and all the various bodies in it are the

instruments of the Deity,) will not suffer us to doubt, that there is an intelligent and benevolent principle within the body, which produces all these skilful motions and kind actions. The sun, the air, the earth, and the waters, are no more able to move themselves, and produce all that beautiful and useful variety of plants, and fruits, and trees, with which our earth is covered, than the body of a man, when the soul hath left it, is able to move itself, form an instrument, plough a field, or build a house. If the

laying out judiciously and well cultivating a small estate, sowing it with proper grain at the best time of the year, watering it in due season and quantities, and gathering in the fruits when ripe, and laying them up in the best manner-if all these effects prove the estate to have a manager, and the manager possessed of skill and strength-certainly the enlightening and warming the whole earth by the sun, and so directing its motion and the motion of the earth as to produce in a constant useful succession day and

night, summer and winter, seed time and harvest; the watering the earth continually by the clouds, and thus bringing forth immense quantities of herbage, grain, and fruits- certainly all these effects continually produced, must prove that a being of the greatest power, wisdom, and benevolence, is continually present throughout our world, which he thus supports, moves, actuates, and makes fruitful.

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24 ATTRIBUTES OF GOD - OMNISCIENCE

The omniscience of God is constantly connected in Scripture with his omnipresence, and forms a part of almost every description of that attribute; for as God is a spirit, and therefore intelligent, if he is everywhere, if nothing can exclude him, not even the most solid bodies, nor the minds of intelligent beings, then are all things "naked and opened to the eyes of him with whom we have to

do." "Where he acts, he is, and where he is, he perceives." "He understands and considers things absolutely, and as they are in their own natures, powers, properties, differences, together with all the circumstances belonging to them." (Bishop wilkins's Principles.) "Known unto him are all his works from the beginning of the world," rather ap àioonfoon from all eternity-known, before they were made, in their possible, and known, now they are made, in their

actual existence. "Lord, thou hast searched me and known me; thou knowest my down-sitting and mine up-rising; thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. - The darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day. -

The ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings; he

searcheth their hearts, and understandeth every imagination of their thoughts." Nor is this perfect knowledge to be confined to men, or angels; it reaches into the state of the dead, and penetrates the regions of the damned. "Hell, hades, is naked before him; and destruction (the seats of destruction) hath no covering." No limits at all are to be set to this perfection. "Great is the Lord, his understanding is INFINITE."

In Psalm 94, the knowledge of God is argued from the communication of it to men. "Understand, ye brutish among the people; and, ye fools, when will ye be wise? He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? He that formed the eye shall he not see? He that chastiseth the heathen shall not he correct? He that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know?" This argument is as easy as it is conclusive, obliging all who acknowledge a First Cause to admit his perfect intelligence, or to take

refuge in Atheism itself. It fetches not the proof from a distance, but refers us to our bosoms for the constant demonstration that the Lord is a God of knowledge, and that by him actions are weighed.

"We find in ourselves such qualities as thought and intelligence, power and freedom, &c, for which we have the evidence of conscious, ness as much as for our own existence. Indeed, it is only by our consciousness of these that our existence is known to ourselves. We know

likewise that these are perfections, and that to have them is better than to be without them. We find also that they have not been in us from eternity. They must, therefore, have had a beginning and consequently some cause, for the very same reason that a being beginning to exist in time requires a cause. Now this cause, as it must be superior to its effect, must have those perfections in a superior degree; and if it be the first cause, it must have them in an infinite or unlimited degree, since bounds or

limitation, without a limiter, would be an effect without a cause."

"If God gives wisdom to the wise, and knowledge to men of under, standing, if he communicates this perfection to his creatures, the inference must be that he himself is possessed of it in a much more eminent degree than they, that his knowledge is deep and intimate, reaching to the very essence of things, theirs but slight and superficial; his clear and distinct, theirs confused and dark; his certain and

infallible, theirs doubtful and liable to mistake; his easy and permanent, theirs obtained with much pains, and soon lost again by the defects of memory or age; his universal and extending to all objects, theirs short and narrow, reaching only to some few things, while that which is wanting cannot be numbered; and therefore as the heavens are higher than the earth, so, as the prophet has told us, are his ways above their ways, and his thoughts above their thoughts." (Tillotsorfs Sermons.)

But His understanding is infinite; a doctrine which the sacred writers not only authoritatively announce, but confirm by referring to the wisdom displayed in his works. The only difference between wisdom and know ledge is, that the former always supposes action, and action directed to an end. But wherever there is wisdom, there must be knowledge; and as the wisdom of God in the creation consists in the formation of things which, by themselves, or in combination with others, shall produce certain

effects, and that in a variety of operation which is to us boundless, the previous knowledge of the possible qualities and effects inevitably supposes a knowledge which can have no limit. For as creation out of nothing argues a power which is omnipotent, so the knowledge of the possibilities of things which are not, a knowledge which, from the effect, we are sure must exist in God, argues that such a Being must be omniscient. For "all things being not only present to him, but also

entirely depending upon him, and having received both their being itself, and all their powers and faculties from him, it is manifest that, as he knows, all things that are, so he must likewise know all possibilities of things, that is, all effects that can be.

For, being himself alone self-existent, and having alone given to all things all the powers and faculties they are endued with, it is evident he must of necessity know perfectly what all and each of those powers and faculties, which

are derived wholly from himself, can possibly produce: and seeing, at one boundless view, all the possible compositions and divisions, variations and changes, circum stances and dependencies of things; all their possible relations one to another, and their dispositions or fitnesses to certain and respective ends, he must, without possibility of error, know exactly what is best and properest in every one of the infinite possible cases or methods of disposing things; and understand perfectly how

to order and direct the respective means, to bring about what he so knows to be, in its kind, or in the whole, the best and fittest in the end. This is what we mean by infinite wisdom."

On the subject of the Divine ubiquity and omniscience, many fine sentiments are found, even among pagans; for an intelligent First Cause being in any sense admitted, it was most natural and obvious to ascribe to him a perfect knowledge of all things. They acknowledged "that

nothing is hid from God, who is intimate to our minds, and mingles himself with our very thoughts;" (9) nor were they all unaware of the practical tendency of such a doctrine, and of the motive it affords to a cautious and virtuous conduct. (1) But among them it was not held, as by the sacred writers, in connection with other correct views of the Divine nature, which are essential to give to this its full moral effect. Not only on this subject does the manner in which the Scriptures state this

doctrine far transcend that of the wisest pagan Theists; but the moral of the sentiment is infinitely more comprehensive and impressive. With them it is connected with man's state of trial; with a holy law, all the violations of which, in thought, word, and deed, are both infallibly known, and strictly marked; with promises of grace; and of mild and protecting government, as to all who - have sought and found the mercy of God, forgiving their sins and admitting them into his family. The wicked are thus reminded

that their hearts are searched, and their sins noted; that the eyes of the Lord are upon their ways; and that their most secret works will be brought to light in the day when God the witness, shall become God the Judge. In like manner, "the eyes of the Lord are said to be over the righteous;" that such persons are kept by him "who never slumbers nor sleeps;" that he is never "far from them," and that "his eyes run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in their behalf;" that

foes, to them invisible, are seen by his eye, and controlled by his arm; and that this great attribute, so appalling to wicked men, affords to them, not only the most influential reason for a perfectly holy temper and conduct, but the strongest motive to trust, and joy, and hope, amidst the changes and afflictions of the present life.

Socrates, as well as other philosophers, could express themselves well, so long as they expressed themselves generally, on this subject. The former

could say, "Let your own frame instruct you.

Does the mind inhabiting your body dispose and govern it with ease? Ought you not then to conclude, that the universal mind with equal ease actuates and governs universal nature; and that, when you can at once consider the interests of the Athenians at home, in Egypt, and in Sicily, it is not too much for the Divine wisdom to take care of the universe? These reflections will soon convince you that the greatness of the Divine

mind is such, as at once to see all things, hear all things, be present everywhere, and direct all the affairs of the world." These views are just; but they wanted that connection with others relative both to the Divine nature and government, which we see only in the Bible, to render them influential; they neither gave correct moral distinctions nor led to a virtuous practice, no not in Socrates, who on some subjects, and especially on the personality of the Deity, and his

independence on matter, raised himself far above the rest of his philosophic brethren, but in moral feeling and practice was as censurable as they. (2)

(9) Nihil Deo clausum, interest animis nostris, et mediis cogitationibus intervenit. Sen. Epist.

(1) Quis enim non timeat Deum, omnia pervidentem, et cogitantem, &c Cic. De Nat. Deor.

(2) Several parallels have been at different times drawn, even by Christian divines, between the

character of Socrates and Christ, doubtless with the intention of exalting the latter, but yet so as to veil the true character of the former. How great is the disgust one feels at that want of all moral delicacy from which only such comparisons could emanate, when the true character of Socrates comes to be unveiled! On a sermon preached at Cambridge by Dr. Butler, which contains one of these parallels, "the Christian Observer" has the following just remarks:-

"We earnestly request that such of our readers as are sufficiently acquainted with classical literature to institute the examination, would turn to the eleventh chapter of the third book of the Memorabilia of Xenophon, and we are persuaded that they will not think our reprehension of Dr. Butler misplaced The very title of the chapter, we should have thought, would have precluded any Christian scholar, much more any Christian divine, from the possibility of being guilty of a profanation so gross and

revolting. The title of it is Cum Merctrice Theodata de arte hominum alliciendorum disserit, (Socrates, viz.) Doubtless many who heard Dr. Butler preach, and many more who have since read his sermon, have taken it for granted, that when he ventured to recommend the conduct of Socrates, in associating with courtesans, as being an adumbration with that of our Savior, he must have alluded to instances in the life of that philosopher of his having labored to reclaim the vicious, or to

console the penitent with the hope of pardon. For ourselves, we know of no such instances. But what will be his surprise to find that the intercourse of Socrates with courtesans, as it is here recorded by Xenophon, was of the most licentious and profligate description?"

The foreknowledge of God, or his prescience of future things, though contingent, is by divines generally included in the term omniscience, and for this they have unquestionably the authority of the Holy

Scriptures. From the difficulty which has been supposed to exist, in reconciling this with the freedom of human actions, and man's accountability, some have however refused to allow prescience, at least of contingent actions, to be a property of the Divine nature; and others have adopted various modifications of opinion, as to the knowledge of God, in order to elude, or to remove the objection. This subject was glanced at in part i, chap. 99 but in this place, where the omniscience of God is

under consideration, the three leading theories, which have been resorted to for the purpose of maintaining unopened the moral government of God, and the freedom and responsibility of man seem to require examination, that the true doctrine of Scripture may be fully brought out and established. (3)

(3) There is another theory which was formerly much debated, under the name of Scientia Media; but to which, in the present day, reference is seldom made.

The knowledge of God was distributed into Necessary, which goes before every act of the will in the order of nature, and by which he knows himself, and all possible things:- free, which follows the act of the will, and by which God knows all things which he has decreed to do and to permit, as things which he wills to be done or permitted:- Middle, so called because partaking of the two former kinds, by which he knows, sub conditione, what men and angels would voluntarily do under any given

circumstances. "Tertiam Mediam, qua sub con ditione novit quid homines aut angeli facturi essent pro sua libertate, si cum his aut illis circumstantiis, in hoc vel in illo rerum ordine constituerentur." - episcopius De Scientia. Dei. They illustrate this kind of knowledge by such passages as, "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! Woe unto thee, Bethsaida! For the mighty works which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes." This distinction,

which was taken from the Jesuits, who drew it from the schoolmen, was at least favored by Hume of the remonstrant divines, as the extract from Episcopius shows; and they seem to have been led to it by the circumstance that almost all the high Calvinist theologians of that day entirely denied the possibility of contingent future actions being foreknown, in order to support on this ground their doctrine of absolute predestination. In this, however, those remonstrants, who adopted

that notion, did not follow their great leader Arminius, who felt no need of this subterfuge, but stood on the plain declarations of Scripture, unembarrassed with metaphysical distinctions. Gomarus, on the other side, adopted this opinion, which was confined, among the Calvinists of that day, to himself and another. Gomarus betook himself to this notion of conditional prescience, in order to avoid being cha rged with making God the author of the sin of Adam, and found it a convenient mode of

eluding so formidable an objection, as Curcellseus remarks: "Sapienter ergo, meo judicio, Gomarus, cum suam de reprobationis objecto sententiam hoc absurdo videret urgeri, quod Deum peccati Adami auctorem constituent, ad preesci-entiam conditionatam confugit, qua Deus ex infinite scientia suck lumine, quadam futura non absolute, sed certa conditione posita pranovit. Hac enim ratione commodissime ictum istum declinavit. - Eumque postea secutus est Wallaeus

in Locis suis Communibus; qui etiam feliciter scopulum ilium prsetervehitur. - Nullum pneterea ex Calvini discipulis novi, qui hanc in Deo scientiam agnoscat. - De Jure Dei.

To what practical end this opinion went, it is not easy to see either as to such of the Calvinists or of the Arminians as adopted it. The point of the question, after all, was, whether the actual circumstances in which a free agent would be placed, and his conduct accordingly, could both be

foreknown. Gomarus, who adopted the view of conditional foreknowledge, as to Adam at least, conceded the liberty of the will, so far as the first man was concerned, to his opponents; but Episcopius and others conceded by this notion something of more importance to the supralapsarians, who denied that the prescience of future contingencies was at all possible.

However both agreed to destroy the prescience of God as to actual contingencies, though the

advocates of the Media Scientia reserved the point as to possible, or rather hypothetic ones, and thus the whole was, after all, resolved into the wider question, Is the knowledge of future contingencies possible? This point will be presently considered.

The Chevalier Ramsay, among his other speculations, holds "it a matter of choice in God, to think of finite ideas;" and similar opinions, though variously worded, have been occasionally adopted. In substance these

opinions are, that though the knowledge of God be infinite, as his power is infinite, there is no more reason to conclude that his knowledge should be always exerted to the full extent of its capacity, than that his power should be employed to the extent of his omnipotence; and that if we suppose him to choose not to know some contingencies, the infiniteness of his knowledge is not thereby impugned. To this it may be answered, "that the infinite power of God is in Scripture represented, as in the

nature of things it must be, as an infinite capacity, and not as infinite in act; but that the knowledge of God is on the contrary never represented there to us as a capacity to acquire knowledge, but as actually comprehending all things that are, and all things that can be. 2. That the notion of God's choosing to know some things, and not to know others, supposes a reason why he refuses to know any class of things or events, which reason, it would seem, can only arise out of their nature and circumstances, and

therefore supposes at least a partial knowledge of them, from which the reason for his not choosing to know them arises. The doctrine is therefore somewhat contradictory. But, 3. It is fatal to this opinion, that it does not at all meet the difficulty arising out of the question of the congruity of Divine prescience, and the free actions of man; since some contingent actions, for which men have been made accountable, we are sure have been foreknown by God, because by his Spirit in the prophets they were

foretold; and if the freedom of man can in these cases be reconciled to the prescience of God, there is no greater difficulty in any other case which can possibly occur.

A second theory is, that the foreknowledge of contingent events, being in its own nature impossible, because it implies a contradiction, it does no dishonor to the Divine Being to affirm, that of such events he has, and can have no prescience whatever; and thus the prescience of God, as to

moral actions being wholly denied, the difficulty of reconciling it with human freedom and.

accountability has no existence. (4)

(4) So little effect has this theory in removing any difficulty, that persons of the most opposite theological sentiments have claimed it in their favor. - Socinus and his followers, - all the supralapsarian Calvinists, - and a few Arminians.

To this the same answer must be given as to the

former. It does not meet the case, so long as the Scriptures are allowed to contain prophecies of reward able and punishable actions.

That man is accountable to God for his conduct, and therefore free, that is, laid under no invincible necessity of acting in a given manner, are doctrines clearly contained in the Bible, and the notion of necessity has here its full and satisfactory reply; but if a difficulty should be felt in reconciling the freedom of an action with the

prescience of it, it affords not the slightest relief to deny the foreknowledge of God as to actions in general, while the Scriptures contain predictions of the con duct of men whose actions cannot have been determined by invincible necessity, because they were actions for which they received from God a just and marked punishment.

Whether the scheme of relief be, that the knowledge of God, like his power, is arbitrary; or that the prescience of

contingencies is impossible; so long as the Scriptures are allowed to contain predictions of the conduct of men, good or bad, the difficulty remains in all its force. The whole body of prophecy is founded on the certain prescience of contingent actions, or it is not prediction, but guess and conjecture-to such fearful results does the denial of the Divine prescience lead! No one can deny that the Bible contains predictions of the rise and fall of several kingdoms; that Daniel, for instance,

prophesied of the rise, the various fortune, and the fall of the celebrated monarchies of antiquity. But empires do not rise and fall wholly by immediate acts of God; they are not thrown up like new islands in the ocean, they do not fall like cities in an earthquake, by the direct exertion of Divine power. They are carried through their various stages of advance and decline, by the virtues and the vices of men, which God makes the instruments, of their prosperity or destruction. Counsels, wars, science,

revolutions, all crowd in their agency; and the predictions are of the combined and ultimate results of all these circumstances, which, as arising out of the vices and virtues of men, out of innumerable acts of choice, are contingent. Seen they must have been through all their stages, and seen in their results, for prophecy has registered those results. The prescience of them cannot be denied, for that is on the record; and if certain prescience involves necessity, then are the daily virtues and vices of men

not contingent. It was predicted that Babylon should be taken by Cyrus in the midst of a midnight revel, in which the gates should be left unguarded and open. Now, if all the actions which arose out of the warlike disposition and ambition of Cyrus were contingent, what becomes of the principle, that it is impossible to foreknow contingencies? -they were foreknown, because

-the result of them was predicted. If the midnight revel of the Babylonian monarch was contingent,

(the circumstance which led to the neglect of the gates of the city,) that also was foreknown, because predicted; if not contingent, the actions of both monarchs were necessary, and to neither of them can be ascribed virtue or vice.

Our Lord predicts, most circumstantially, the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. If this be allowed, then the contingencies involved in the conduct of the Jews who provoked that fatal war-in the Roman senate

who decreed it-in the Roman generals who carried it on-in the Roman and Jewish soldiers who were engaged in it-were all foreseen, and the result of them predicted: if they were not contingencies, that is, if they were not free actions, then the virtues and vices of both parties, and all the acts of skill, and courage, and enterprise; and all, the cruelties and sufferings of the besieged and the besiegers, arising out of innumerable volitions, and giving rise to the events so circumstantially marked in

the prophecy, were determined by an irreversible necessity. The 53d chapter of Isaiah predicts, that Messiah should be taken away by a violent death, inflicted by men in defiance of all the principles of justice. The record cannot be blotted out; and if the conduct of the Jews was not, as the advocates of this scheme will con tend it was not, * influenced by necessity, then we have all the contingencies of their hatred, and cruelties, and injustice predicted, and therefore foreknown. The

same observations might be applied to St. Paul's prediction of a "falling away," in the Church; of the rise of the "man of sin;" and, in a word, to every prediction which the sacred volume contains. If there be any predictions in the Bible at all, every scheme which denies the prescience of contingencies must compel us into the doctrine of necessity, which in this place it is not necessary to discuss.

On the main principle of the theory just mentioned, that the pre science of

contingent events is impossible, because their nature would be destroyed by it, we may add a few remarks. That the subject is incomprehensible as to the manner in which the Divine Being foreknows future events of this or of any kind, even the greatest minds, which have applied themselves to such speculations, have felt and acknowledged. The fact, that such a property exists in the Divine nature is, however, too clearly stated in Scripture to allow of any doubt in those who are disposed to submit to its

authority; and it is not left to the un-certainty of our speculations on the properties of spiritual natures, either to be confirmed or disproved. Equally clear is it that the moral actions of men are not necessitated, because human accountability is the main pillar of that moral government, whose principles, conduct, and ends, are stated so largely in Divine revelation. Whatever, therefore, becomes of human speculations, these points are sufficiently settled on an authority which is

abundantly sufficient. To the objection of metaphysicians of different classes, against either of these principles, that such is not the sense of the Scriptures, because the fact "cannot be so, it involves a contradiction," not the least importance is to be attached, when the plain, concurrent, and uniform sense of Scripture, interpreted as any other book would be interpreted, determines to the contrary. It surely does not follow that a thing cannot be, because men do not see, or pretend not to see, that it

can be. This would lay the foundation of our faith in the strength or weakness of other men's intellect. We are not, however, in many cases, left wholly to this answer, and it may be shown that the position, that certain prescience destroys contingency, is a mere sophism, and that this conclusion is connected with the premise, by a confused use of terms.

The great fallacy in the argument, that the certain prescience of a moral action destroys its

contingent nature, lies in supposing that contingency and certainty are the opposites of each other. It is, perhaps, unfortunate, that a word which is of figurative etymology, and which consequently can only have an ideal application to such subjects, should have grown into common use in this discussion, because it is more liable on that account to present itself to different minds under different shades of meaning. If, however, the term contingent in this controversy has any

definite meaning at all, as applied to the moral actions of men, it must mean their freedom, and stands opposed not to certainty, but to necessity. A free action is a voluntary one; and an action which results from the choice of the agent, is distinguished from a necessary one in this, that it might not have been, or have been otherwise, according to the self-determining power of the agent. It is with reference to this specific quality of a free action, that the term contingency is used, - it might have been

otherwise, in other words, it was not necessitated.

Contingency in moral actions is, therefore, their freedom, and is opposed, not to certainty, but to necessity. The very nature of this controversy fixes this as the precise meaning of the term. The question is not, in point of fact, about the certainty of moral actions, that is, whether they mil happen or not; but about the nature of them, whether free or constrained, whether they must happen or not. Those who advocate this theory

care not about the certainty (5) of actions, simply considered, that is, whether they will take place or not; the reason why they object to a certain prescience of moral actions is, that they conclude, that such a prescience renders them necessary.

It is the quality of the action for which they contend, not whether it will happen or not. If contingency meant uncertainty, the sense in which such theorists take it, the dispute would be at an end. But though an

uncertain action cannot be foreseen as certain, a free, unnecessitated action may; for there is nothing in the knowledge of the action, in the least, to affect its nature.

Simple know ledge is, in no sense, a cause of action, nor can it be conceived to be causal, unconnected with exerted power: for mere knowledge, therefore, an action remains free or necessitated, as the case may be. A necessitated action is not made a voluntary one by its being foreknown: a free action is

not made a necessary one. Free actions foreknown will not, therefore, cease to be contingent. But how stands the case as to their certainty 1 Precisely on the same ground. The certainty of a necessary action foreknown, does not result from the knowledge of the action, but from the operation of the necessitating cause; and in like manner, the certainty of a free action does not result from the know ledge of it, which is no cause at all, but from the voluntary cause, that is, the determination of the will. It

alters not the case in the least, to say that the voluntary action, might have been otherwise. Had it been otherwise, the knowledge of it would have been otherwise; but as the will, which gives birth to the action, is not dependent upon the previous knowledge of God, but the knowledge of the action upon foresight of the choice of the will, neither the will nor the act is controlled by the knowledge, and the action, though foreseen, is still free or contingent.

(5) Certainty is, properly speaking, no quality of an action at all, unless it be taken in the sense of a fixed and necessitated action; in this controversy it means the certainty which the mind that foresees has, that an action will be done, and the certainty is therefore in the mind, and not in the action.

The foreknowledge of God has then no influence upon either the freedom or the certainty of actions, for this plain reason, that it is knowledge, and not influence; and actions may

be certainly foreknown, without their being rendered necessary by that foreknowledge. But here it is said, if the result of an absolute contingency be certainly foreknown, it can have no other result, it cannot happen otherwise. This is not the true inference. It will not happen otherwise; but I ask, why can it not happen otherwise 1 Can is an expression of potentiality, it denotes power or possibility. The objection is, that it is not possible that the action should otherwise happen. But why

not? What deprives it of that power? If a necessary action were in question, it could not otherwise happen than as the necessitating cause shall compel; but then that would arise from the necessitating cause solely and not from the pre science of the action, which is not causal. But if the action be free, and it enter into the very nature of a voluntary action to be unconstrained, then it might have happened in a thousand other ways, or not have happened at all; the foreknowledge of it no

more affects its nature in this case than in the other. All its potentiality, so to speak, still remains, independent of foreknowledge, which neither adds to its power of happening otherwise, nor diminishes it. But then we are told, that the prescience of it, in that case, must be uncertain: not unless any person can prove, that the Divine prescience is unable to dart through all the workings of the human mind, all its comparison of things in the judgment, all the influences of motives on

the affections, all the hesitancies, and haltings of the will, to its final choice. "Such knowledge is too wonderful for us" but it is the knowledge of Him who "understand eth the thoughts of man afar off."

But if a contingency will have a given result, to that result it must be determined. Not in the least. We have seen that it cannot be determined to a given result by mere precognition, for we have evidence in our own minds that mere knowledge is not causal to the actions of

another. It is determined to its result by the will of the agent; but even in that case, it cannot be said, that it must be determined to that result, because it is of the nature of freedom to be unconstrained; so that here we have an instance in the case of a free agent that he will act in some particular manner, but that it by no means follows from what will be, whether foreseen or not, that it must be.

On this subject, so much controverted, and on which so much, in the way of logical consequence,

depends, I add a few authorities.

Dr. S. Clarke observes, "They who suppose that events, which are called contingent, cannot be certainly foreknown, must likewise suppose that when there is not a chain of necessary causes, there can be no certainty of any future events; but this is a mistake, for let us suppose that there is in man a power of beginning motion, and of acting with what has, of late, been called philosophical freedom; and let us suppose farther, that

the actions of such a man cannot possibly be foreknown; will there not yet be in the nature of things, notwithstanding this supposition, the same certainty of event in every one of the man's actions, as if they were ever so fatal and necessary? For instance, suppose the man; by an internal principle of motion, and an absolute, freedom of mind, to do some particular action today, and supposed was not possible that this action should have been foreseen yesterday, was there not, nevertheless, the same

certainty of event, as if it had been foreseen, and absolutely necessary? That is, would it not have been as certain a truth yesterday, and from eternity, that this action was an event to be performed today, notwithstanding the supposed freedom, as it is now a certain and infallible truth that it is performed? Mere certainty of event, therefore, does not, in any measure, imply necessity. And surely it implies no contradiction to suppose, that every future event which, in the nature of

things, is now certain, may now be certainly known by that intelligence which is omniscient. The manner how God can foreknow future events, without a chain of necessary causes, it is indeed impossible for us to explain, yet some sort of general notion of it we may conceive. For, as a man who has no influence over another person's actions, can yet often perceive beforehand what that other will do; and a wiser and more experienced man, with still greater probability will foresee what another, with

whose disposition he is perfectly acquainted, will in certain circumstances do; and an angel, with still less degree of error, may have a farther prospect into men's future actions: so it is very reasonable to conceive, that God, without influencing men's wills by his power, or subjecting them to a chain of necessary causes, cannot but have a knowledge of future free events, as much more certain than men or angels can possibly have, as the perfection of his nature is greater than that of theirs. The distinct manner

how he foresees these things, we cannot, indeed, explain; but neither can we explain the manner of numberless other things, of the reality of which, however, no man entertains a doubt."

Dr. Copleston judiciously remarks:-

"The course indeed of the material world seems to proceed upon such fixed and uniform laws, that short experience joined to close attention is sufficient to enable a man, for all useful purposes, to anticipate the general

result of causes now in action. In the moral world much greater uncertainty exists. Everyone feels, that what depends upon the conduct of his fellow creatures is less certain, than1 what is to be brought about by the agency of the laws of matter: and yet even here, since man is a being of a certain composition, having such and such faculties, inclinations, affections, desires, and appetites, it is very possible for those who study his nature attentively, especially for those who have practical

experience of any individual or of any community of men, to foretell how they will be affected, and how they will act under any supposed circumstances. The same power (in an unlimited degree as before) it is natural and reasonable to ascribe to that Being, who excels the wisest of us infinitely more than the wisest of us excels his fellow creatures.

"It never enters the mind of a person who reflects in this way, that his anticipation of another's

conduct lays any restraint upon that man's conduct when he comes to act. The anticipation indeed is relative to himself, not to the other. If it affected him in the 'remotest degree, his conduct would vary in proportion to the strength of the conviction in the mind of the thinker that he will so act. But no man really believes in this magical sympathy. No man supposes the certainty of the event (to use a common, but, as I conceive, an improper term,) to correspond at all with the certainty of him

who foretells or expects it. In fact, every day's experience shows, that men are deceived in the event, even when they regarded themselves as most certain, and when they would readily have used the strongest phrases to denote that certainty, not from any intention to deceive, but from an honest persuasion that such an event must happen. How is it then? God can never be deceived- his knowledge therefore is always accompanied or followed by the event- and yet if we get an idea of what his knowledge is, by our

own, why should we regard it as dragging the event along with it, when in our own case we acknowledge the two things to have no connection?

"But here the advocate for necessity interposes, and says, True, your knowledge does not affect the event, over which you have no power: but God, who is all-powerful, who made all things as they are, and who knows all that will come to pass, must be regarded as rendering that necessary which he foreknows-just as even you may be

considered accessory to the event which you anticipate, exactly in proportion to the share you have had in preparing the instruments or forming the minds of those who are to bring it about.

"To this I answer, that the connection between knowledge and the event is not at all established by this argument. It is not because I knew what would follow, but because I contributed toward it, that it is influenced by me. You may if you please contend, that because God made

everything, therefore all things that happen are done by him. This is taking another ground, for the doctrine of necessity, which will be considered presently. All I maintain now is, that the notion of God's foreknowledge ought not to interfere in the slightest degree with our belief in the contingency of events, and the freedom of human actions. The confusion has, I conceive, arisen chiefly from the ambiguity of the word certainty, used as it is even by learned writers, both in its relation to the mind

which thinks, and to the object about which it is thinking." (Inquiry into Necessity, &c.)

To the above I add a passage from a divine of much older date, who has stated the argument with admirable clearness:-

In answer to the common argument, "As a thing is, such is the knowledge of it: future contingencies are uncertain, therefore they cannot be known as certain," he observes, "It is wonderful, that acute minds should not have detected the fallacy of this

paralogism. For the major, which is vaunted as an axiom of undoubted truth, is most false unless it be properly explained. For if a thing is evil, shall the know ledge of it be evil 1 Then neither God nor angels could know the sins of men, without sinning themselves! Again, should a thing be necessary, will the knowledge of it, on that account, be also necessary? But many things are necessary in the nature of things, which either are unknown to us, or only known doubtfully. Many persons doubt even the

existence of God, which in the highest sense is necessary, so far are they from having a necessary knowledge of him. That proposition, therefore, is only true in this sense, that our knowledge must agree with the things which are known, and that we know them as they are in reality, and not otherwise. Thus I ought to think, that the paper on which I write is white and the ink black; for if I fancy the ink white, and the paper black, this is not knowledge, but ignorance, or rather deception. In like manner true knowledge

ought to regard things necessary as necessary, and things contingent as contingent: but it requires not that necessary things should be known necessarily, and contingent things contingently; for the contrary often happens.

"But the minor of the above syllogism is ambiguous and improper. The things about which our minds are exercised, are in themselves neither certain nor uncertain. They are called so only in respect of him who knows them; but they themselves are

necessary or contingent. But if you understand by a certain thing, a necessary one, and by an uncertain thing that which is contingent, as many by an abuse of terms do, then your minor will appear to be identical and nugatory, for it will stand, 'Future contingencies are contingent,' from which no conclusion can be drawn. It is to be concluded, that certitude and incertitude are not affections of the things which are or may be known, but of the intellect of him who has knowledge of them, and who forms

different judgments respecting them. For one and the same thing, without any change in itself, may be certain and uncertain at the same time; certain indeed to him who knows it certainly, but to him who knows it not, uncertain. For example, the same future eclipse of the sun shall be certain to a skilful astronomer who has calculated it: uncertain to him who is ignorant of the laws of the heavenly bodies. But that cannot be said concerning the necessity and contingency of things. They remain

such as they are in their own nature, whether we know them or not; for an eclipse, which from the laws of nature must necessarily take place, is not made contingent by my ignorance and uncertainty whether it will or will not happen. For this reason they are mistaken who say that things determined by the decree of God, are necessary in respect of God; but that to us, who know not his decrees, they are contingent; for our ignorance cannot make that which is future and necessary, because God

hath decreed it, change its nature, and become contingent. It is no contra diction indeed to say, that one and the same thing may be at once necessary and yet uncertain, but that it should be necessary and contingent is a manifest contradiction. To God, therefore, whose knowledge is infinite, future contingencies are indeed certain, but to angels and men uncertain; nor are they made necessary because God knows them certainly. The knowledge of God influences nothing

extrinsically, nor changes the nature of things in any wise. He knows future necessary things as necessary, but contingencies as contingencies; otherwise he would not know them truly, but be deceived, which cannot happen to God." (Curcellaus, De Jure Dei, 1645.)

The rudiments of the third theory which this controversy has called forth, may be found in many theological writers, ancient and modern; but it is stated at large in the

writings of Archbishop King, and requires some notice, because the views of that writer have of late been again made a subject of controversy. They amount, in brief, to this, that the fore knowledge of God must be supposed to differ so much from any thing of the kind we perceive in ourselves, and from any ideas which we can possibly form of that property of the Divine nature, that no argument respecting it can be grounded upon our imperfect notions; and that all controversy on subjects

connected with it is idle and fruitless.

In establishing this view. Archbishop King, in his Sermon on Divine Predestination and Foreknowledge, has the following observations:-

"It is in effect agreed on all hands, that the nature of God is incomprehensible by human understanding; and not only his nature, but likewise his powers and faculties, and the ways and methods in which he exercises them, are so far beyond our reach, that we are utterly incapable of

framing exact and adequate notions of them.

"We ought to remember, that the descriptions which we frame to ourselves of God, or of the Divine attributes, are not taken from any direct or immediate perceptions that we have of him or them; but from some observations we have made of his works, and from the consideration of those qualifications, that we conceive would enable us to perform the like.

"It doth truly follow from hence, that God must

either have these, or other faculties equivalent to them, and adequate to these mighty effects which proceed from them. And because we do not know what his faculties are in themselves, we give them the names of those powers, that we find would be necessary to us in order to produce such effects, and call them wisdom, understanding, and foreknowledge; yet at the same time we cannot but be sensible, that they are of a nature alto gather different from ours, and that we have no direct and

proper notion or conception of them.

Only we are sure, that they have effects like unto those that proceed from wisdom, understanding, and foreknowledge in, us; and that when our works fail to resemble them in any particular, it is by reason of some defect in these qualifications.

"Thus our reason teaches us to ascribe these attributes to God, by way of analogy to such qualities as we find most valuable in ourselves.

"If we look into the Holy Scriptures, and consider the representations given us there of God or his attributes, we shall find them plainly borrowed from some resemblance to things, with which we are acquainted by our senses. Thus when the Holy Scriptures speak of God, they ascribe hands, and eyes, and feet to him: not that we should believe he has any of these members, according to the literal signification; but the meaning is, that he has a power to execute all those acts, to the effecting of

which these parts in us are instrumental: that is, he can converse with men, as well as if he had a tongue and mouth; he can discern all that we do or say, as perfectly as if he had eyes and ears; he can reach us as well as if he had hands and feet; he has as true and substantial a being as if he had a body; and he is as truly present everywhere, as if that body were infinitely extended.

"After the same manner, we find him represented as affected with such passions as we perceive to be in

ourselves, namely, as angry and pleased, as loving and hating, as repenting and changing his resolutions, as full of mercy and provoked to revenge. And yet on reflection we cannot think, that any of these passions literally affect the Divine nature.

"And as the passions of men are thus by analogy ascribed to God, because these would in us be the principles of such outward actions, as we see he has performed; so by the same condescension to the weakness of our capacities,

we find the powers and operations of our minds ascribed to him.

"The use of foreknowledge with us is to prevent any surprise when events happen, and that we may not be at a loss what to do by things coming upon us unawares. Now inasmuch as we are certain that nothing can surprise God, and that he can never be at a loss what to do; we conclude that God has a faculty to which our foreknowledge bears some analogy, therefore we call it by that name.

"But it does not follow from hence that any of these are literally in God, after the manner they are in us, any more than hands or eyes, than love or hatred are; on the contrary we must acknowledge, that those things, which we call by these names, when attributed to God, are of so very different a nature from what they are in us, and so superior to all that we can conceive, that in reality there is no more likeness between them, than between our hand and God's power. Nor can we draw con sequences from

the real nature of one to that of the other, with more justness of reason, than we can conclude, because our hand consists of fingers and joints, therefore the power of God is distinguished by such parts.

"So that to argue, 'because foreknowledge, as it is in us, if supposed infallible, cannot consist with the contingency of events, therefore what we call so in God cannot,' is as far from reason, as it would be to conclude, because our eyes cannot see in the dark,

therefore when God is said to see all things, his eyes must be enlightened with a perpetual sun shine; or because we cannot love or hate without passion, therefore when the Scriptures ascribe these to God, they teach us that he is liable to these affections as we are.

"We ought, therefore, to interpret all these things, when attributed to God only by way of condescension to our capacities, in order to help us to conceive what we are to expect from him, and

what duty we are to pay him. Particularly, the terms of foreknowledge, predestination, nay, of understanding and will, when ascribed to him, are not to be taken strictly or properly, nor are we to think that they are in him in the same sense that we find them in ourselves; on the contrary, we are to interpret them only by way of analogy and comparison."

These views have recently been advocated by Dr. Copleston, in his "Inquiry into the Doctrines of

Necessity and Predestination;" but, to this theory, the first objection is, that, like the former, it does not in the least relieve the difficulty, for the entire subduing of which it was adopted.

For though foreknowledge in God should be admitted to be something of a "very different nature" to the same quality in man, yet as it is represented as something equivalent to foreknowledge, whatever that something may be; as, in consequence of it, prophecies have actually

been uttered and fulfilled, and of such a kind, too, as relate to actions for which men have in fact been held accountable; all the original difficulty of reconciling contingent events to this something, of which human foreknowledge is a "kind of shadow," as "a map of China is to China itself," remains in full force. The difficulty is shifted, but not removed; it cannot even be with more facility slide past; and either the Christian world must be content to forego all inquiries into these

subjects, — a consummation not to be expected, however it may be wished,

- or the contest must be resumed on another field, with no advantage from better ground or from broader daylight.

A farther objection to these notions is, that they are dangerous.

For if it be true, that the faculties we ascribe to God are "of a nature altogether different from our own, and that we have no direct and proper notion or

conception of them" then, in point of fact, we have no proper revelation at all of the nature of God, and of his attributes, in the Scriptures; and what we esteem to be such, is a revelation of terms, to which we can attach no "proper notion." If this conclusion be well founded, then, it is so monstrous that the premises on which it hangs must be unsound and anti-Scriptural. This alone is a sufficient general refutation of the hypothesis: but a more particular examination will

show that it rests upon false assumptions; and that it introduces gratuitous difficulties, not called for by the supposed difficulty of reconciling the fore knowledge of God with the freedom of human actions.

1. It is assumed that the descriptions which we frame to ourselves of God, are taken from the observations we have made on his works, and from the consciousness of those qualifications which, we conceive, would enable us to perform the like. This might be, in part, true of

heathens left without the light of revelation; but it is not true of those who enjoy that advantage. Our knowledge of God comes from the Scriptures, which are taught to us in our infancy, and with which, either by reading or hearing, we become familiar as we grow up. The notions we have of God, so far as they agree with the Scriptures, are, therefore, not those which we have framed by the process assumed by the archbishop, but those which have been declared to us in the Scriptures by

God himself, as descriptions of his own nature. This makes a great difference. Our own modes of forming conceptions of the Divine nature would have no authority higher than ourselves; the announcements of Scripture are the word of God, communicating by human language the truth and reality of things, as to himself. This is the constant profession of the sacred writers; they tell us, not what there is in man which may support an analogy between man and

God, but what God is in himself.

2. It is assumed, that because the nature of God is "incomprehensible" we have no "proper notion or conception of it." The term "proper notion" is vague. It may mean "an exact and adequate notion," which it may be granted without hesitation that we have not; or it may mean a notion correct and true in itself, though not complete and comprehensive. A great part of the fallacy lies here. To be incomprehensible, is not,

in every case, and assuredly not in this, to be unintelligible.

We may know God, though we cannot fully know him; and our notions may be true, though not adequate; and they must be true, if we have rightly understood God's revelation of himself. Of being, for instance, we can form a true notion, because we are conscious of our own existence; and though we cannot extend the conception to absolute being or self-existence, because our being is a dependent one, we can yet

supply the defect, as we are taught by the Scriptures, by the negative notion of independence. Of spirit we have a true notion, and understand, therefore, what is meant, when it is said, that "God is a spirit;" and though we can have but an imperfect conception of an infinite spirit, we can supply that want also, to all practical purposes, by the negative process of removing all imperfection, or limit of excellence, from our views of the Divine nature. We have a true notion of the presence of one being with

other beings, and with place; and though we cannot comprehend the mode in which God is omnipresent, we are able to conceive without difficulty the fact, that the Divine presence fills all things. We have true notions of power and knowledge; and can suppose them infinite, though how they should be so, we know not. And as to the moral attributes, such as truth, justice, and goodness, we have not only true, but comprehensive, and for anything that appears to the contrary, adequate notions of them;

for our difficulties as to these attributes do not arise from any incapacity to conceive of what is perfect truth, perfect justice, and perfect goodness, but from our inability to show how many things, which occur in the Divine government, are to be reconciled to these attributes;-

and that, not because our notions of the attributes themselves are obscure, but because the things, out of which such questions arise, are either in themselves, or in their

relations, but partially understood or greatly mistaken.- Job and his friends did not differ in abstract views of the justice of the moral government of God, but in reconciling Job's afflictions with it.

3. It is assumed that the nature of God is essentially different from the spiritual nature of man.

This is not the doctrine of Scripture. - When it says, that "God is a spirit;" we have no reason to conclude that a distant analogy, such a one as springs out of mere relation which, in a

poetic imagination, might be sufficient to support a figure of speech, is alone intended. The very argument connected with these words, in the discourse of our Lord with the woman of Samaria, forbids this. It is a declaration of the nature of God, and of the worship suited to his nature; and the word employed is that by which both Jews and Samaritans had been taught by the same inspired records, which they each possessed, to designate and conceive of the intellectual nature of

man. The nature of God, and the nature of man, are not the same; but they are similar, because they bear many attributes in common, though on the part of the Divine nature in a degree of perfection infinitely exceeding. The difference of degree, however, cannot prove a difference of essence, - no, nor the circumstance that one has attributes which the other has not, - in any sense of the word difference which could be of service to the advocates of this hypothesis. But if a total difference is proved as

to the intellectual attributes of God and men, that difference must be extended to the moral attributes also; and so the very foundation of morals and religion would be undermined. This point was successfully pressed by Edwards against Archbishop King, and it is met very feebly by Dr. Copleston. "Edwards," he observes, "raises a clamor about the moral attributes, as if their nature also must be held to be different in kind from human virtues, if the know ledge of God be admitted to be different in

kind from ours." Certainly this follows from the principles laid down by Archbishop King; and if his followers take his conclusions as to the intellectual attributes, they must take them as to the moral attributes also. If the faculties of God be "of a nature altogether different from ours," we have no more reason to except from this rule the truth and the justice, than the wisdom and the prescience of God; and the reasoning of Archbishop King is as conclusive in the one case as in the other.

The fallacy of the above assumptions is sufficient to destroy the hypothesis which has been built upon them; and the argument from Scripture may be shown to be as unfounded. It is, as the above extract will show, in brief this, that as the Scriptures ascribe, by analogy, hands, and eyes, and feet to God, and also the passions of love, hatred, anger, &c, "because these would be in us the principles of such outward actions as we see he has performed; so, by the same condescension, to the weakness of our capacities,

we find the powers and operations of our minds ascribed to him." But will the advocates of this opinion look steadily to its legitimate consequences? We believe not; and those consequences must, therefore, be its total refutation.

For if both our intellectual and moral affections are made use of but as distant analogies, and obscure intimations, to convey to us an imperfect knowledge of the intellectual powers and affections of the Divine nature, in the same manner

as human hands, and human eyes, are made to represent his power and his knowledge, - it follows that there is nothing in the Divine nature which answers more truly and exactly to knowledge, Justice, truth, mercy, and other qualities in man, than the knowledge of God answers to human organs of vision, or his power to the hands or the feet; and from this it would follow, that nothing is said in the Scriptures of the Divine Being, but what is, in the highest sense, figurative, and purely metaphorical.

We are no more like God in our minds than in our bodies, and it might as truly have been said with respect to man's bodily shape, as to his mental faculties, that man was made "in the image of God." (6) (6) "Though his grace rightly lays down analogy for the foundation of his discourse, yet, for want of having thoroughly weighed and digested it, and by wording himself incautiously, he seems entirely to destroy the nature of it; insomuch that while he rejects the strict propriety of our

conceptions and words, on the one hand, he appears to his antagonists to run into an extreme even below metaphor, on the other.

"His greatest mistake is, that through his discourse he supposes the members and actions of a human body, which we attribute to God in a pure metaphor, to be equally upon the same foot of analogy with the passions of a human soul, which are attributed to him in a lower and more imperfect degree of analogy; and even with the operations and perfections

of the pure mind or intellect which are attributed to him in a yet higher and more complete degree. In pursuance of this oversight, he expressly asserts love and anger, wisdom and goodness, knowledge and foreknowledge, and all the other Divine attributes to be spoken of God, as improperly as eyes or ears; that there is no more likeness between these things in the Divine nature and in ours, than there is between our hand and God's power, and that they

are not to be taken in the same sense.

"Agreeably to this incautious and indistinct manner of treating a subject curious and difficult, he hath unwarily dropped some such shocking expressions as these, the best representations we can make of God are infinitely short of truth. Which God forbid, in the sense his adversaries take it; for then all our reasonings concerning him would be groundless and false. But the saying is evidently true

in a favorable and qualified sense and meaning; namely, that they are infinitely short of the real, true, internal nature of God as he is in himself. - Again, that they are emblems indeed and parabolical figures of the Divine attributes, which they are designed to signify; as if they were signs or figures of our own, altogether precarious and arbitrary, and without any real and true foundation of analogy between them in the nature of either God or man: and accordingly he unhappily describes the knowledge

we have of God and his attributes, by the notion we form of a strange country by a map, which is only paper and ink, strokes and lines"

(Bishop brown's Procedure of Human Understanding.)

It is also to be observed, that when the Scriptures speak of the knowledge, power, and other attributes of God, in figurative language, taken from the eyes or hands of the body, it is sufficiently obvious that this language is metaphorical, not only from the reason of things

itself, but because the same ideas are also quite as often expressed without figure; and the metaphor therefore never misleads us. We have sufficient proof also that it never did mislead the Jews, even in the worst periods of their history, and when their tendency to idolatry and gross superstition was most powerful. They made images in human shape of other gods; but never of JEHOVAH: the Jews were never anthropomorphites, whatever they might be beside. But it is equally certain, that they did give a literal interpretation to

those passages in their Scriptures which speak of the knowledge, justice, mercy, &c, of God, as the same in kind, though infinitely higher in their degree of excellence, with the same qualities in men. The reason is obvious: they could not interpret those passages of their holy writings which speak of the hands, the eyes, and the feet of God literally; because every part of the same sacred revelation was full of representations of the Divine nature, which declared his absolute spirituality: and they could

not interpret those passages figuratively which speak of the intellectual and moral qualities of God in terms that express the same qualities in men; because their whole revelation did not furnish them with any hint, even the most distant, that there was a more literal or exact sense in which they could be taken. It was not possible for any man to take literally that sublimely figurative representation of the upholding and ruling power of God, where he is said to "hold the waters of the ocean in the hollow of

his hand," unless he could also conclude that where he is said to "weigh the hills in scales, and the mountains in a balance," he was to understand this literally also. The idea suggested is that of sustaining, regulating, and adjusting power; but if he were told, that he ought to take the idea of power in as figurative a sense as that of the waters being held in the hollow of the hand of God, and his weighing the mountains in scales, he would find it impossible to form any idea of the thing signified at all. The first

step in the attempt would plunge him into total darkness. The figurative hand assists him to form the idea of managing and controlling power, but the figurative power suggests nothing; and so this scheme blots out entirely all revelation of God of any kind, by resolving the whole into figures, which represent nothing of which we can form any conception.

The argument of archbishop king, from the passions which are ascribed to God in

Scripture, is not more conclusive. "After the same manner we find him represented as affected with such passions as we perceive to be in ourselves, as angry and pleased, as loving and hating, as repenting and changing his resolutions, as full of mercy, and provoked to revenge; and yet, on reflection, we cannot think that any of these passions literally affect the Divine nature." But why not? As they are represented in Scripture to be affections of the Divine nature, and not in the gross manner in

which they are expressed in this extract, there seems nothing improper in taking them literally; and no necessity is made out to compel us to understand them to signify somewhat for which we have not a name, and of which we can form no idea. The Scriptures nowhere warrant us to consider God as a cold metaphysical abstraction; and they nowhere indicate to us that when they ascribe affections to him, they are to be taken as mere figures of speech. On the contrary, they teach us to consider

them as answering substantially, though not circumstantially to the innocent affections of men and angels. Why may not anger be "literally" ascribed to God, not indeed as it may be caricatured to suit a theory, but as we find it ascribed in the Scriptures? It is not malignant anger, nor blind, stormy, and disturbing anger, which is spoken of; nor is this always, nor need it be at any time, the anger of creatures. There is an anger which is without sin in man, - "a perception of evil, and opposition to it,

and also an emotion of mind, a sensation, or passion, suitable thereto." (Wesley.) There was this in our Lord, who was without sin; nor is it represented by the evangelists, who give us the instances, as even an infirmity of the nature He assumed. In God it may be allowed to exist in a different manner to that in which it is found even in men who are "angry and sin not;" it is accompanied with no weakness, it is allied to no imperfection; but that it does exist as truly in him as in man, is the doctrine of Scripture;

and there is no perfection ascribed to God, to which it can be proved contrary, or with which we cannot conceive it to coexist. (7)

(7) Melancthon says: "The Lord was very angry with Aaron to have destroyed him; and I [Moses] prayed for Aaron also at the same time, Deut. ix, 20. Let us not elude the exceedingly lamentable expressions which the Holy Ghost employs when he says, God was very angry; and let us not feign to ourselves a God of stone, or a Stoical Deity. For though God is

angry in a different manner from men, yet let us conclude that God was really angry with Aaron, and that Aaron was not then in [a state of] grace, but obnoxious to everlasting punishment. Dreadful was the fall of Aaron, who had through fear yielded to the madness of the people when they instituted the Egyptian worship. Being warned by this example, let us not confirm ourselves in security, but acknowledge that it is possible for elect and renewed persons

horribly to fall," &c. (Loci Pracipui Theologi, 1543.)

Not only anger, we are told, is ascribed to God, but "the being pleased." Let the term used be complacency, instead of one which seems to have been selected to convey a notion of a lower and less worthy kind; and there is no incongruity in the idea. he is the blessed or happy God, and therefore capable of pleasure. He looked upon his works, and saw that they were "good," "very good," - words which suggest the idea of his

complacency upon their completion; and this, when separated from all connection with human infirmity, appears to be a perfection, and not a defect. To be incapable of complacency and delight, is the character of the Supreme Being of epicurus and of the modern Hindus, of whose internal state, so to speak, deep sleep, and the surface of an unruffled lake, are favorite figurative representations. But of this refinement we have nothing in the Bible, nor is it in the least necessary to our idea of infinite

perfection. And why should not love exist in God, in more than a figurative sense? For this affection to be ac companied with perturbation, anxiety, and weak or irrational partiality, is a mere accident. So we often see it in human beings; but though this affection, without any concurrent infirmity, be ascribed to God, it surely does not follow that it exists in him, as something in nature "wholly different" from love in wise and holy creatures, in angels and in saints. Not only the beauty,

the force, and the encouragement of a thou sand passages of Scripture would be lost, upon this hypothesis; but their meaning also. Love in God is something, we are told, which is so called, because it produces similar effects to those which are proceed by love in man; but what this something is, we are not informed; and the revelation of Scripture as to God, is thus reduced to a revelation of his acts only, but not, in the least, of the principles from which they flow. (8) (8) "It would destroy the confidence of

prayer, and the ardor of devotion, if we could regard the Deity as subsisting by himself, and as having no sympathies, but mere abstract relations to the whole family in heaven and earth; and I look upon it as one of the most rational and philosophical confutations of your system, that it is fitted neither for the theory nor the practice of our religion; and that, if we could adopt it, we must henceforth exchange the language of Scripture for the anthems of Epicurus:-

"Omnis enim per se Divum natura necesse est,

Immortali sevo summa cum pace fruatur,

Semota ab nostris rebus, sejunctaque longe;

Nam privata dolore omni, privata periculis,

Ipsa suis pollens opibus, nihil indiga nostri,

Nee bene promeritis capitur, nee tangitur ira.

"It is in direct opposition to all such vain and skeptical speculations, that Christianity always represents and speaks of

the Deity as participating, so far as infinity and perfection may participate, in those feelings and affections which belong to our rational natures." (grinfield's Vindicia Analogical

The same observations may be applied to "mercy and revenge" by the latter of which the archbishop can mean nothing more than judicial vengeance, or retribution, though an equivocal term has been adopted, ad captandum. "Repenting, and changing his resolutions," are

improperly placed among the affections; but, freed from ideas of human infirmity, they may be, without the least dishonor to the fullness of the Divine perfections, ascribed to God in as literal a sense as we find them stated in the Scriptures. They there clearly signify no more than the change which takes place in the affections of God, his anger or his love, as men turn from the practice of righteousness, or repent and turn back again to him; and the consequent changes in his dispensations toward them

as their Governor and Lord. This is the Scriptural doc trine, and there is nothing in it which is not most worthy of God, though literally interpreted; nothing which is not consistent with his absolute immutability. He is unchangeably the lover and the rewarder of righteous ness, unchangeably the hater and the judge of iniquity; and as his creatures are righteous or wicked, or are changed from the one state to the other, they become the objects of the different regards, and of the

different administrations, of the same righteous and gracious Sovereign, who, by these very changes, shows that he is without variableness, or shadow of turning.

If then there is no reason for not attributing even certain affections of the human mind to God, when connected with absolute perfection and excellence, in their nature and in their exercise, no reason certainly can be given for not considering his intellectual attributes, represented, as to their

nature though not as to their degree, by terms taken from the faculties of the human mind, as corresponding with our own. But the matter is placed beyond all doubt by the appeal which is so often made in the Bible to these properties in man, not as illustrations only of something distantly and indistinctly analogous to properties in the Divine nature, but as representations of the nature and reality of these qualities in the Supreme Being, and which are, therefore, made the

grounds of argument, the basis of duty, and the sources of consolation.

With respect to the nature of God, it is sufficient to refer to the pas sage before mentioned, -

"God is a SPIRIT;- where the argument is, that he requires not a ceremonial but a spiritual worship, the worship of man's spirit; because he himself is a spirit. How this argument could be brought out on Archbishop king's and Dr. Copleston's theory, it is difficult to state. It would be something of this kind:-

God is a SPIRIT; that is, he is called a spirit, because his nature is analogous to the spiritual nature of man: but this analogy implies no similarity of nature: it is a mere analogy of relation; and therefore, though we have no direct and proper notion of the nature of God, yet, because he is called a Spirit, "they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." This is indeed far from being an intelligible, and it is still less a practical, argument.

With respect to his intellectual attributes, it is argued in Scripture, "He that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know?" Here the knowledge of God is supposed to be of the same nature as the know ledge of man. This is the sole foundation of the argument; which would have appeared indescribably obscure, if, according to Archbishop King's hypothesis, it had stood, -

"He that teacheth man knowledge, shall he not

have somewhat in his nature, which, because it gives rise to actions similar to those which proceed from knowledge, we may call knowledge, but of which we have no direct or proper notion?"

With respect to his moral attributes, we find the same appeals, - "Shall not the Judge of the whole earth do right?" Here the abstract term right is undoubtedly used in the sense commonly received among men, and is supposed to be comprehensible by them. -

"The righteous lord loveth righteousness." The righteousness in man which he loveth, is, clearly, correspondent in its kind to that which constitutes him eminently "the righteous Lord." - Still more forcibly, the house of Israel is called upon "to judge between him and his vineyard:" he condescends to try his own justice by the notions of justice which prevail among men; in which there could be no meaning, if this moral quality were not in God and in man of the same kind. - "Hear now, O house

of Israel, is not my way equal?"But what force would there be in this challenge, designed to silence the murmurs of a people under correction, as though they had not been justly dealt with, if justice among men had no more resemblance to justice in God than a hand to power, or an eye to knowledge, or "a map of China to China itself?" The appeal is to a standard common to both, and by which one might be as explicitly determined as the other. (9) Finally, the ground of all praise and adoration of God for works

of mercy and judgment, - of all trust in God, on account of his faithfulness and truth, - and of all imitation of God in his mercy and compassion,

- is laid in every part of the word of God, not surely in this, that there are unknown and unapprehended qualities of some kind in God, which lead him to perform actions similar to those which flow from justice, truth and mercy in men; but in the consideration that he is justice itself, truth itself, and goodness

itself. The hypothesis is therefore contradicted by the Scripture; and though it has been assumed in favor of a great truth, - that the prescience of God does not destroy the liberty of man, - that truth needs not so cumbrous and mischievous an auxiliary.

Divine foreknowledge and the freedom of human agency are compatible, not because foreknowledge in God is a figure of speech, or something different in kind to foreknowledge in man; but because knowledge, simply considered, whether

present, past, or future, can have no influence upon action at all, and cannot therefore change a contingent action into a necessary one.

(9) How can we confess God to be just, if we understand it not? But how can we understand him so, but by the measures of justice? and how shall we know that, if there be two justices, one that we know, and one that we know not, one contrary to another? If they be contrary, they are not justice; for justice can be no more opposed to

justice, than truth to truth: if they be not contrary, then that which we understand to be just in us, is just in God; and that which is just once, is just for ever in the same case and circumstances: and, indeed, how is it that we are in all things of excellency and virtue to be like God, and to be meek like Christ; to be humble as he is humble, and to be pure like God, to be just after his example, to be merciful as our heavenly Father is merciful? If there is but one mercy, and one justice, and one meekness,

then the measure of these, and the reason, is eternally the same. If there be two, either they are not essential to God, or else not imitable by us: and then how can we glorify God, and speak honor of his name, and exalt his justice, and magnify his truth, and sincerity, and simplicity, if truth and simplicity, and justice, and mercy in him is not that thing which we understand, and which we are to imitate?"

&c. (Bishop taylor's "Ductor Dubitantium.")

For, after all, where does the great theological difficulty lie, for the evasion of which so much is to be sacrificed? The prescience, counsels, and plans of God, are prescience, counsels, and plans, which respect free agents, as far as men are concerned; and unless we super add influence to necessitate, or plans to entice irresistibly and to entrap in evitably, into some given course of conduct, there is clearly no incongruity between these and human freedom. There is a difficulty in conceiving

how foreknowledge should be absolute, as there is a difficulty in conceiving how God's present knowledge should penetrate the heart of man, and know his present thoughts: but neither party argues from the incomprehensibility of the mode to the impossibility of the thing.

The great difficulty does not then lie here. It seems to be planted precisely in this, that God should prohibit many things, which he nevertheless knows will occur, and in the prescience of which he

regulates his dispensations to bring out of these circumstances various results, which he makes subservient to the displays of his mercy and his justice; and particularly, that in the case of those individuals who, he knows, will finally perish, he exhorts, warns, invites, and, in a word, takes active and influential means to prevent a foreseen result. This forms the difficulty; because, in the case of man, the prescience of failure would, in many cases, paralyze all effort, -

whereas, in the government of God, men are treated, in our views, with as much intensity of care and effort, as though the issue of things was entirely unknown. But if the perplexity arises from this, nothing can be more clear than that the question is not, how to reconcile God's prescience with the freedom of man; but how to reconcile the conduct of God toward man, considered as a free agent, with his own prescience; how to assign a congruity to warnings, exhortations, and other means adopted

to prevent destruction as to individuals, with the certain foresight of that terrible result. In this, however, no moral attribute of God is impugned. On the contrary, mercy requires the application of means of deliverance, if man be under a dispensation of grace; and justice requires it, if man is to be judged for the use or abuse of mercy. The difficulty then entirely resolves itself into a mere matter of feeling, which, of course, - as we cannot be judges of a nature infinite in perfection, though

similar to what is excellent in our own, nor of proceedings which, in the unlimited range of the government of God, may have connections and bearings beyond all our comprehension, - we cannot reduce to a human standard. Is it, then, to adjust a mere matter of feeling, that we are to make these outrageous interpretations of the word of God, in what he hath spoken of himself? And are we to deny that we have no "proper or direct notion of God," because we cannot find him out to perfection?

This difficulty, which we ought not to dare to try by human standards, is not one however, we again remark, which arises at all out of the relation of the Divine prescience to the liberty of human actions; and it is entirely untouched by any part of this controversy. We fall into new difficulties through these speculations, but do not escape the true one. If the freedom of man is denied, the moral attributes of God are impugned; and the difficulty, as a matter of feeling, is heightened.

Divine prescience cannot be denied, because the prophetic Scriptures have determined that already; and if Archbishop King's interpretation of foreknowledge be resorted to, the something substituted for prescience, and equivalent to it, comes in, to bring us back, in a fallacious circle, to the point from which we started.

It may therefore be certainly concluded, that the omniscience of God comprehends his certain prescience of all events

however contingent; and if anything more were necessary to strengthen the argument above given, it might be drawn from the irrational, and, above all, the unscriptural consequences, which would follow from the denial of this doctrine. These are forcibly stated by President Edwards:-

"It would follow from this notion, (namely, that the Almighty doth not foreknow what will be the result of future contingencies,) that as God is liable to be continually

repenting what he has done; so he must be exposed to be constantly changing his mind and intentions as to his future conduct; altering his measures, relinquishing his old designs, and forming new schemes and projections. For his purposes, even as to the main parts of his scheme, namely, such as belong to the state of his moral kingdom, must be always liable to be broken, through want of foresight; and he must be continually putting his system to rights, as it gets out of

order, through the contingence of the actions of moral agents: he must be a Being, who, instead of being absolutely immutable, must necessarily be the subject of infinitely the most numerous acts of repentance, and changes of intention, of any being whatsoever; for this plain reason, that his vastly extensive charge comprehends an infinitely greater number of those things which are to him contingent and uncertain. In such a situation he must have little else to do, but to

mend broken links as well as he can, and be rectifying his disjointed frame and disordered movements, in the best manner the case will allow. The supreme Lord of all things must needs be under great and miserable disadvantages, in governing the world which he has made, and has the care of, through his being utterly unable to find out things of chief importance, which hereafter shall befall his system; which, if he did but know, he might make seasonable provision for. In many cases, there may be very great necessity that

he should make provision, in the manner of his ordering and disposing things, for some great events which are to happen, of vast and extensive influence, and endless consequence to the universe; which he may see afterward, when it is too late, and may wish in vain that he had known beforehand, that he might have ordered his affairs accordingly. And it is in the power of man, on these principles, by his devices, purposes, and actions, thus to disappoint God, break his measures, make him

continually to change his mind, subject him to vexation, and bring him into confusion."

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25 ATTRIBUTES OF GOD - IMMUTABILITY, WISDOM

Another of the qualities of the Divine nature, on which the sacred writers often dwell, is his unchangeableness. This is indicated in his august and awful title, I am. All other beings are dependent and mutable, and thus stand in

striking contrast to him who is independent, and therefore capable of no mutation. "Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thy hands; they shall perish; but thou shalt endure, - yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end. - He is the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. - His counsel standeth fast

forever, and the thoughts of his heart to all generations. - His mercy endureth forever. - His righteousness is like the great mountains, firm and unmovable. - I am the Lord, I change not."

Of this truth, so important to religion and to morals, there are many confirmations from subjects constantly open to observation. The general order of nature, in the revolutions of the heavenly bodies; the succession of seasons; the laws of animal and vegetable production;

and the perpetuation of every species of beings, from which, if there be occasional deviations, they prove the general regularity and stability of this material system, or they would cease to attract attention. The ample universe, therefore, with its immense aggregate of individual beings and classes of being, displays not only the all-comprehending and pervading power of God; but, as it remains from age to age subject to the same laws, and fulfilling the same purposes, it is a

visible image of the existence of a being of steady counsels, free from caprice, and liable to no control.

The moral government of God gives its evidence also to the same truth. The laws under which we are now placed, are the same as those which were prescribed to the earliest generations of men. What was vice then, is vice now; and what is virtue now, was then virtue. Miseries of the same kind and degree inflict punishment on the former; peace and

blessedness, as formerly, accompany the latter. God has manifested his will to men by successive revelations, the patriarchal, the Mosaic, and the Christian, and those distant from each other many ages 5 but the moral principles on which each rests, are precisely the same, and the moral ends which each proposes. Their differences are circumstantial, varying according to the age of the world, the condition of mankind, and his own plans of infinite wisdom; but the identity of their

spirit, their influence, and their character, shows their author to be an unchangeable being of holiness, truth, justice, and mercy. Vicious men have now the same reason to tremble before God, as in former periods, for he is still "of purer eyes than to behold iniquity;" and the penitent and the pious have the same ground of hope, and the same sure foundation of trust. These are the cautionary and the cheering moral uses to which the sacred writers constantly apply this doctrine. He is "the Lord,

the hope of their fathers;" and in all the changes and vicissitudes of life, this is the consolation of his people, that he will never leave them, nor forsake them. "Though the mountains depart, and the hills be removed, yet my kindness shall not depart from thee, nor shall the covenant of my peace be removed."

It is true, that the stability of the Divine operations, and counsels, as indicated by the laws of the material universe, and the revelations of his will, only

show the immutability of God through those periods within which these operations and dispensations have been in force; but in Scripture they are constantly represented as the results of an immutability which arises out of the perfection of the Divine nature itself, and which is therefore essential to it. "I am the Lord, I change not:" he changes not, because he is "the Lord." - With him there is "no variableness, neither shadow of turning;" because he is "the Father of lights", the source and

fullness of all light and perfection whatever Change in any sense which implies defect and infirmity, and therefore imperfection, is impossible to absolute perfection; and immutability is therefore essential to his Godhead. In this sense, he is never capable of any kind of change whatever, as even a heathen has so strongly expressed it, oudepote, oudamh, oudamws alloiwsin, oudemian endecetai. (plato in Phaed.) For "if we consider the nature of God, that he is a self-existent and

independent Being, the great Creator and wise Governor of all things; that he is a spiritual and simple being, void of all parts and all mixture, that can induce a change; that he is a sovereign and uncontrollable Being, which nothing from without can affect or work an alteration in; that he is an eternal being, which always has, and always will go on in the same tenor of existence; an omniscient being, who, knowing all things, has no reason to act contrary to his first resolves; and, in all

respects, a most perfect being, that can admit of no addition or diminution; we cannot but believe, that both in his essence, in his knowledge, and in his will and purposes, he must of necessity be unchangeable. To suppose him otherwise, is to suppose him an imperfect being: for if he change, it must be either to a greater perfection than he had before, or to a less; if to a greater perfection, then was there plainly a defect in him, and a privation of something better than what he had, or was; then again was he not always the best,

and consequently not always God: if he change to a lesser perfection, then does he fall into a defect again; lose a perfection he was possessed once of, and so ceasing to be the best being, cease at the same time to be God.

The sovereign perfection of the Deity therefore is an invincible bar against all mutability; for, which way soever we suppose him to change, his supreme excellency is nulled or impaired by it: for since in all changes, there is something from which, and

something to which, the change is made, a loss of what the thing had, or an acquisition of what it had not, it must follow, that if God change to the better, he was not perfect before, and so not God; if to be worse, he will not be perfect, and so no longer God, after the change. We esteem changeable ness in men either an imperfection or a fault: their natural changes, as to their persons, are from weakness and vanity; their moral changes, as to their inclinations and purposes, are from ignorance or

inconstancy, and therefore this quality is no way compatible with the glory and attributes of God." (Charnock.) In his being and perfections, God is therefore eternally the same. He cannot cease to be, he cannot be more perfect because his perfection is absolute; he cannot be less so, because he is independent of all external power, and has no internal principle of decay. We are not however so to interpret the immutability of God, as though his operations admitted no change, and even no

contrariety; or that his mind was incapable of different regards and affections toward the same creatures under different circumstances. He creates and he destroys; he wounds and he heals; he works and ceases from his works; he loves and hates; but these, as being under the direction of the same immutable wisdom, holiness, goodness, and justice, are the proofs, not of changing, but of unchanging principles, as stated in the preceding chapter. They are perfections, not

imperfections. Variety of operation, the power to commence, and cease to act, show the liberty of his nature; the direction of this operation to wise and good ends shows its excellence. Thus in Scripture language "he repents" of threatened, or commenced punishment, and shows mercy; or "is weary of forbearing" with the obstinately guilty, and so inflicts vengeance. Thus, "he hates the evil doer," and "loveth the righteous." That love too may be lost, "if the righteous turn away from his righteousness;"

and that hatred may be averted, "when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness." There is a sense in which this may be called change in God, but it is not the change of imperfection and defect. It argues precisely the contrary. If when "the righteous man turneth away from his righteousness," God's love to him were unchangeable, he could not be the unchangeably holy God, the hater of iniquity; and "when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness," and, by the

grace of the Holy Spirit, becomes a new creature, if he did not become the object of God's love, God would not be the unchangeable lover of righteousness. By these Scriptural doctrines, the doctrine of the Divine immutability is not therefore contradicted, but confirmed.

Various speculations, however, on the Divine immutability occur in the writings of divines and others, which, though often well intended, ought to be received with caution, and

sometimes even rejected as bewildering or pernicious. Such are the notions, that God knows everything by intuition; that there is no succession of ideas in the Divine mind, that he can receive no new idea; that there are no affections in God, for to suppose that would suppose that he is capable of emotion; that if there are affections in God, as love, hatred, &c, they always exist in the same degree, or else he would suffer change: for these and other similar speculations, recourse may be had to the schoolmen;

and metaphysicians, by those who are curious in such subjects; but the impression of the Divine character, thus represented, will be found very different to that conveyed by those inspired writings in which God is not spoken of by men, but speaks of himself; and nothing could be more easily shown than that most of these notions are either idle, as assuming: that we know more of God than is revealed; or such as tend to represent the Divine Being as rather a necessary, than a free

agent, and his moral perfections as resulting from a blind physical necessity of nature, more than from an essential moral excellence, or, finally, as unintelligible, or absurd. As a specimen of the latter, the following passages may be taken from a work in some repute. The arguments are drawn from the schoolmen, and though broadly given by the author, will be found more or less to tinge the remarks on the immutability of God, in the most current systems of

theology, and discourses on the attributes:-

"His knowledge is independent upon the objects known, therefore whatever changes there are in them, there is none in him. Things known are considered either as past, present, or to come, and these are not known by us in the same way; for concerning things past it must be said that we once knew them; or of things to come, that we shall know them hereafter; whereas God, with one view, comprehends all things

past and future, as though they were present.

"If God's knowledge were not unchangeable, he might be said to have different thoughts or apprehensions of things at one time, from what he has at another, which would argue a defect of wisdom. And indeed a change of sentiments implies ignorance, or weakness of understanding; for to make advances in knowledge, supposes a degree of ignorance: and to decline therein is to be reduced to a state of ignorance: now it

is certain, that both these are inconsistent with the infinite perfection of the Divine mind; nor can any such defect be applied to him, who is called, The only wise God" (ridgley's Body of Divinity.)

In thus representing the knowledge of God as "independent of the objects known;" in order to the establishing of such an immutability of knowledge, as is not only not inconsistent with the perfection of that attribute, but without which it could not be perfect; and in

denying that knowledge in God has any respect to the past, present, and future of things, a very important distinction between the knowledge of things possible, and the knowledge of things actual, both of which must be attributed to God, is strangely overlooked.

In respect of possible beings, the Divine knowledge has no relation to time, and there is in it no past, no future; he knows his own wisdom and omnipotence, and that is knowing everything

respecting them. But to the possible existence of things, we must now add actual existence; that commenced with time, or time with that. Here then is another branch of the Divine knowledge, the knowledge of things actually existing, a distinction with which the operations of our own minds make us familiar; and from the actual existence of things arise order and succession, past, present, and future, not only in the things themselves, but in the Divine knowledge of them

also; for as there could be no knowledge of things in the Divine mind as actually existing, which did not actually exist, for that would be falsehood, not truth, so if things have been brought into actual existence in succession, the knowledge of their actual existence must have been successive also; for as actual existences they could not be known as existing before they were.

The actual being of things added nothing to the knowledge of the infinite mind as to their powers

and properties. Those he knew from himself, the source of all being, for they all depended upon his will, power, and wisdom. There was no need, for instance, to set the mechanism of this universe in motion, that he might know how it would play, what properties it would exhibit, what would be its results; but the knowledge of the universe, as a congeries of beings in ideal, or possible existence, was not the knowledge of it as a real existence; that, as far as we can see, was only possible when "he spake and it was

done, when he commanded and it stood fast:" the knowledge of the actual existence of things with God is therefore successive, because things come into being in succession, and, as to actual existences, there is foreknowledge, present knowledge, and after knowledge, with God as well as with our selves.

But not only is a distinction to be made between the knowledge of God as to things possibly, and things actually existing; but also between his knowledge of all possible things, and of

those things to which he determined before their creation to give actual existence. To deny that in the Divine mind any distinction existed between the apprehension of things which would remain possible only, and things which in their time were to come into actual being, would be a bold denial of the perfect knowledge of God.

Here however it is intimated, that this makes the knowledge of God to be derived from something out of himself, and if he

derive his knowledge from something out of himself, then it must be dependent. And what evil follows from this? The knowledge of the nature, properties, and relations of things, God has from himself, that is from the knowledge he has of his own wisdom and omnipotence, by which the things that are have been produced, and from which only they could be produced, and in this respect his knowledge is not dependent; but the knowledge that they actually exist is not from himself, except as he makes

them to exist; and when they are made to be, then is the know ledge of their actual existence derived from them, that is, from the fact itself. As long as they are, he knows that they are; when they cease to be, he knows that they are not; and before they exist he knows that they do not yet exist. His knowledge of the crimes of men, for instance, as actually committed, is dependent upon the committal of those crimes. He knows what crime is, independent of its actual existence; but the

knowledge of it as committed, depends not on himself, but upon the creature. And so far is this from derogating from the know ledge of God, that, according to the common reason of things, it is thus only that we can suppose the knowledge of God to be exact and perfect

But this is not all which sustains the opinion, that there is order and succession also in the knowledge of the Divine Being. It is not only as far as the knowledge of the successive and transient

actual existence of things is concerned, that both fore and after knowledge are to be ascribed to God, but also in another respect. Authors of the class just quoted, speak as though God himself had no ideas of time, and order, and sue-cession; as though past, and present, and to come, were so entirely and exclusively human, that even the infinite mind itself had not the power of apprehending them. But if there be actually a successive order of events as to us, and if this be something real, and not a

dream, then must there be a corresponding knowledge of it in him, and therefore, in all things which respect us, a knowledge of them as past, present, or to come, that is, as they are in the experience of mankind, and in the truth of things itself. Beside this, if there be what the Scriptures call "purposes" with God; if this expression is not to be ranked with those figures of speech which represent Divine power by a hand and an arm, then there is foreknowledge, strictly and properly so called, with God. The knowledge of any

thing actually existing is collateral with its existence; but as the intention to produce anything, or to suffer it to be produced, must be before the actual existence of the thing, because that is finite and caused, so that very intention is in proof of the precognition of that which is to be produced, immediately by the act of God, or immediately through his permission. The actual occurrence of things in succession as to us, and in pursuance of his purpose or permission, is therefore a sufficient proof

of the existence of a strict and proper prescience of them by almighty God. As to the possible nature, and properties, and relations of things, his knowledge may have no succession, no order, of time; but when those archetypes of things in the eternal mind, come into actual being by his power or permission, it is in pursuance of previous intention: ideas of time are thus created, so to speak, by the very order in which he produces them, or purposes to produce them, and his knowledge of them as realities corresponds to

their nature and relations, because it is perfect knowledge. He knows them before they are produced, as things which are to be produced or permitted; when they are produced, he knows them with the additional idea of their actual being; and when they cease to be, he knows them as things which have been.

Allied to the attribute of immutability is the liberty of God, which enables us to conceive of his unchangeableness in the noblest and most worthy

manner, as the result of his will, and infinite moral excellence, and not as the consequence of a blind and physical necessity. "He doth whatever pleaseth him," and his actions are the result of will and choice. This, as Dr. S. Clarke has well stated it, follows from his intelligence; for "intelligence without liberty, is really, in respect of any power, excellence, or perfection, no intelligence at all. It is indeed a consciousness, but it is merely a passive one; a consciousness, not of

acting, but purely of being acted upon. Without liberty nothing can, in any tolerable propriety of speech, be said to be an agent, or cause of anything. For to act necessarily, is really and properly not to act at all, but only to be acted upon.

"If the Supreme Cause is not a being endued with liberty and choice, but a mere necessary agent, whose actions are all as absolutely and naturally necessary as his existence; then it will follow, that nothing which is not, could

possibly have been; and that nothing which is, could possibly not have been; and that no mode or circumstance of the existence of anything could possibly have been in any respect otherwise than it now actually is. All which being evidently most false and absurd, it follows on the contrary, that the Supreme Cause is not a mere necessary agent, but a being endued with liberty and choice."

It is true, that God cannot do evil. "It is impossible for him to lie" But "this is a

necessity, not of nature and fate, but of fitness and wiz Dom; a necessity, consistent with the greatest freedom and most perfect choice. For the only foundation of this necessity, is such an unalterable rectitude of will, and perfection of wisdom, as makes it impossible for a wise being to resolve to act foolishly; or for a nature infinitely good, to choose to do that which is evil."

Of the wisdom of God, it is here necessary to say little, because many instances of

it in the application of knowledge to accomplish such ends as were worthy of himself and requisite for the revelation of his glory to his creatures, have been given in the proofs of an intelligent and designing cause, with which the world abounds. On this, as well as on the other attributes, the Scriptures dwell with an interesting complacency, and lead us to the contemplation of an unbounded variety of instances in which this perfection of God has been manifested to men. He is "the only wise God;"and as

to his works, "in wisdom hast thou made them all." Everything has been done by nice and delicate adjustment, by number, weight, and measure. "He seeth under the whole heaven, to make the weight for the winds, to weigh the waters by measure, to make a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder." Whole volumes have been written on this amazing subject, "the Wisdom of God in the Creation," and it is still unexhausted. Every research into nature, every discovery as to the laws by

which material things are combined, decomposed, and transformed, throws new light upon the simplicity of the elements, which are the subjects of this ceaseless operation of Divine power, and the exquisite skill, and unbounded compass of the intelligence which directs it. The vast body of facts which natural philosophy has collected with so much laudable labor, and the store of which is constantly increasing, is a commentary on the words of inspiration, ever enlarging, and which will

continue to enlarge as long as men remain on earth to pursue such inquiries; "he doeth great things past finding out, and wonders without number." "Lo, these are parts of his ways, but how little a portion is heard of him!" The excellent books which have been written with the express design to illustrate the wisdom of God, and to exhibit the final causes of the creation, and preservation of the innumerable creatures with which we are surrounded, must be ref erred to on so copious a subject, (1) and a

few general remarks must suffice.

(1) Ray's "Wisdom of God." - Derham's Astro and Physico-Theology. - Paley's Nat.

Theol.-Sturm's Reflections. - Kirby and Spence's Entomology; and, though toot written with any such design, St. Pierre's "Studies of Nature" open to the mind that can supply the pious sentiments which the author unfortunately wanted, many striking instances of the wisdom and benevolence of God.

The first character of wisdom is to act for worthy ends, To act with design is a sufficient character of intelligence; but wisdom is the fit and proper exercise of the understanding; and though we are not adequate judges of what it is fit and proper for God to do in every case, yet for many of his acts the reasons are at least partially given in his own word, and they command at once our adoration and gratitude, as worthy of himself and benevolent to us. The reason of the creation of the world was

the manifestation of the perfections of God to the rational creatures designed to inhabit it, and to confer on them, remaining innocent, a felicity equal to their largest capacity. The end was important, and the means by which it was appointed to be accomplished evidently fit. To be was itself made a source of satisfaction. God was announced to man as his Maker, Lord, and Friend, by revelation; but invisible himself, every object was fitted to make him present to the mind of his creature, and to be a

remembrance of his power, glory, and care.

The heavens "declared his glory;" the fruitful earth "his goodness." The understanding of man was called into exercise by the number and variety, and the curious structure of the works of God; pleasures of taste were formed by their sublimity, beauty, and harmony. "Day unto day uttered speech, night unto night taught knowledge;" and God in his law, and in his creative munificence and preserving care, was thus ever placed before his

creature, arrayed in the full splendor of his natural and moral attributes, the object of awe and love, of trust and of submission. The great moral end of the creation of man, and of his residence in the world, and the means by which it was accomplished, were, therefore, displays of the Divine wisdom.

It is another mark of wisdom when the process by which any work is accomplished is simple, and many effects are produced from one or a few elements. "When every

several effect has a particular separate cause, this gives no pleasure to the spectator, as not discovering contrivance; but that work is beheld with admiration and delight as the result of deep counsel, which is complicated in its parts, and yet simple in its operation, when a great variety of effects are seen to arise from one principle operating uniformly." (Abernethy on Attributes.) This is the character of the works of God. From one material substance, (2) possessing the same

essential properties, all the visible beings which surround us are made; the granite rock, and the central all-pervading sun; the moveless clod, the rapid lightning, and the transparent air. Gravitation unites the atoms which compose the world, combines the planets into one system, governs the regularity of their motions, and yet vast as is its power, and all-pervading as its influence, it submits to an infinite number of modifications, which allow of the motion of individual booties; and it gives place

to even contrary forces, which yet it controls and regulates. One act of Divine power in giving a certain inclination to the earth's axis, produced the effect of the vicissitude of seasons, gave laws to its temperature, and covered it with increased variety of productions. To the composition, and a few simple laws impressed upon light, every object owes its color, and the heavens and the earth are invested with beauty. A combination of earth, water, and the gasses of the atmosphere, forms the

strength and majesty of the oak, the grace and beauty, and odor of the rose; and from the principle of evaporation, are formed clouds which "drop fatness," dews which refresh the languid fields, springs and rivers that make the valleys, through which they flow, "laugh and sing."

(2) "A few undecompounded bodies, which may perhaps ultimately be resolved into still fewer elements, or which may be different forms of the same material,

constitute the whole of our tangible universe of things." (Davy's Chymistry.)

Variety of equally perfect operation is a character of wisdom. In the works of God the variety is endless, and shows the wisdom from which they spring to be infinite. Of that mind in which all the ideas after which the innumerable objects composing the universe must have had a previous and distinct existence, because after that pattern they were made; and not only the

ideas of the things themselves, but of every part of which they are composed; of the place which every particle in their composition should fill, and the part it should act, we can have no adequate conception. The thought is overwhelming. This variety is too obvious to be dwelt upon; yet a few of its nicer shades may be adverted to, as showing, so to speak, the infinite resources, and the endlessly diversified conceptions of the Creator. "O Lord, how manifold are thy works!" All the three

kingdoms of nature pour forth the riches of variety. The varied forms of crystallization and composition in minerals; the colors, forms, and qualities of vegetables; the kinds and properties, and habits of animals. The gradations from one class of beings to another; from unformed to organic, from dead to living, from mechanic sensitiveness to sensation, from dull to active sense, from sluggishness to motion; from creeping to flying, from sensation to intellect, from instinct to reason, (3)

from mortal to immortality, from man to angel, from angel to seraph.

Between similitude and total unlikeness variety has a boundless range; but its delicacy of touch, so to speak, is shown in the narrower field that lies between similarity and entire resemblance, of which the works of God present so many curious examples. No two things appear exactly alike, when even of the same kind. Plants of the same species, the leaves and flowers of

the same plant, have all their varieties. Animals of the same kind have their individual character. Any two blades of grass, or particles of sand, shall show a marked difference when carefully compared. The wisdom of this appears more strongly marked when we consider that important ends, both intellectual and practical, often depend upon it. The resemblances of various natural things in greater or less degree, become the means of acquiring a knowledge of them with greater ease, because it is

made the basis of their arrangement into kinds and sorts, without which the human memory would fail, and the understanding be confused. The differences in things are as important as their resemblances. This is strikingly illustrated in the domestic animals and in men.

If the individuals of the former did not differ, no property could be claimed in them, or when lost they could not be recovered. The countenance of one human individual differs from all

the rest of his species; his voice and his manner have the same variety. This is not only an illustration of the resources of creative power and wisdom; but of design and intention to secure a practical end. Parents, children, and friends, could not otherwise be distinguished, nor the criminal from the innocent. No felon could be identified by his accuser, and the courts of judgment would be obstructed, and often rendered of no avail for the protection of life and property.

(3) It is not intended here to countenance the opinion that the difference between the highest instinct and the lowest reason, is not great. It is as great as the difference between an accountable and an unaccountable nature; between a being under a law offered, and a law of moral obligation and motive; between a nature limited in its capacity of improvement, and one whose capabilities are unlimited. "The rash hypothesis, that the Negro is the connecting link between the white man and

the ape, took its rise from the arbitrary classification of Linnaeus, which associates man and the ape in the same order. The more natural arrangement of later systems separate them into the bimanous and quadrumanus ciders. If this classification had not been followed, it would not have occurred to the most fanciful mind to find in the Negro an intermediate link," (pritchard on Man.)

To variety of kind and form, we may add variety of magnitude. In the works of God we have the

extremes, and those extremes filled up in perfect gradation from magnificence to minuteness. We adore the mighty sweep of that power which scooped out the bed of the fathomless ocean, molded the mountains, and filled space with innumerable worlds; but the same hand formed the animalcule, which requires the strongest magnifying power of optical instruments to make it visible In that too the work is perfect. We perceive matter in its most delicate organization, bones,

sinews, tendons, muscles, arteries, veins, the pulse of the heart, and the heaving of the lungs. The workmanship is as complete in the smallest as in the most massive of the works of God.

The connection and dependence of the works of God are as wonderful as their variety. Everything fills its place, not by accident, but by design; wise regulation runs through the whole, and shows that that whole is the work of one, and of one alone. The meanest weed

which grows, stands in intimate connection with the mighty universe itself. It depends upon the atmosphere for moisture, which atmosphere supposes an ocean, clouds, winds, gravitation; it depends upon the sun for color, and, essentially, for its required degree of temperature. This supposes the revolution of the earth, and the adjustment of the whole planetary system. Too near the sun, it would be burned up; too far from it, it would be chilled. What union of extremes is here, - the grass of the earth,

"which today is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven," with the stupendous powers of nature, the most glorious works of the right hand of God!

So clearly does wisdom display itself, in the adoption of means to ends in the visible world, that there are comparatively few of the objects which surround us, and few of their qualities, the use of which is not apparent. In this particular, the degree in which the Creator has been pleased to manifest

his wisdom is remarkably impressive.

"Among all the properties of things, we discover no inutility, no superfluity. Voluntary motion is denied to the vegetable creation, because mechanical motion answers the purpose. This raises, in some plants, a defense against the wind, expands others toward the sun, inclines them to the support they require, and diffuses their seed. If we ascend higher toward irrational animals, we find them possessed of powers exactly suited to the rank

they hold in the scale of existence.

"The oyster is fixed to his rock; the herring traverses a vast extent of ocean. But the powers of the oyster are not deficient; he opens his shell for nourishment, and closes it at the approach of an enemy. Nor are those of the herring superfluous; he secures and supports himself in the frozen seas, and commits his spawn in the summer to the more genial influence of warmer climates. The strength and ferocity of beasts of prey are required by the mode of

subsistence allotted to them.

If the ant has peculiar sagacity, it is but a compensation for its weakness; if the bee is remarkable for its foresight, that foresight is rendered necessary by the short duration of its harvest. Nothing can be more various than the powers allowed to animals, each in their order yet it will be found, that all these powers, which make the study of nature so endless and so interesting, suffice to their necessities and no

more." (Sumner's Records of Creation.)

"Equally conspicuous is the wisdom of God in the government of nations, of states, and of kingdoms: yea, rather more conspicuous: if infinite can be allowed to admit of any degrees. For the whole inanimate creation, being totally passive and inert, can make no opposition to his will.

Therefore, in the natural world all things roll on in an even uninterrupted course. But it is far otherwise in the moral

world. Here evil men and evil spirits continually oppose the Divine will, and create numberless irregularities. Here, therefore, is full scope for the exercise of all the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, in counteracting all the wickedness and folly of men, and all the subtlety of Satan, to carry on his own glorious design, the salvation of lost man-kind. Indeed, were he to do this by an absolute decree, and by his own irresistible power, it would imply no wisdom at all. But his

wisdom is shown, by saving man in such a manner as not to destroy his nature, nor to take away the liberty which he has given him." (Wesley's Sermons.) But in the means by which offending men are reconciled to God, the inspired writers of the New Testament peculiarly glory as the most eminent manifestations of the wisdom of God.

"For the wonderful work of redemption the apostle gives us this note, that ' he hath therein abounded in all wisdom and prudence.'

Herein did the perfection of wisdom and prudence shine forth, to reconcile the mighty amazing difficulties and seeming contrarieties, real contrarieties indeed, if he had not some way intervened, to order the course of things, such as the conflict between justice and mercy;- that the one must be satisfied in such a way as the other might be gratified: which could never have had its pleasing grateful exercise without being reconciled to the former. And that this should be brought about by such an expedient, that

there should be no complaint on the one hand, nor on the other. Herein hath the wisdom of a crucified Redeemer, that whereof the crucified Redeemer or Savior was the effected object, triumphed over all the imaginations of men, and all the contrivances even of devils, by that death of his, by which the devil purposed the last defeat, the complete destruction of the whole design of his coming into the world, even by that very means, it is brought about so as to fill hell with horror, and

heaven and earth with wonder." (Howe's Posthumous Works.)

"Wisdom in the treasure of its incomprehensible light, devised to save man, without prejudice to the perfections of God, by transferring the punishment to a Surety, and thus to punish sin as required by justice, and pardon the sinner as desired by mercy." (Bates's Harmony.)

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26 ATTRIBUTES OF GOD - GOODNESS

Goodness, when considered as a distinct attribute of God, is not taken in the sense of universal rectitude, but signifies benevolence, or a disposition to communicate happiness. From an inward principle of good will, God exerts his omnipotence in diffusing happiness through the universe, in all fitting proportion, according to the different capacities with which he has endowed his creatures, and

according to the direction of the most perfect wisdom. "Thou art good, and doest good. - The Father of lights, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift. - O praise the Lord! for he is good, and his mercy endureth forever."

This view of the Divine character in the Holy Scriptures has in it, some important peculiarities, too often overlooked, but which give to the revelation they make of God, a singular glory.

Goodness in God is represented as goodness of nature; as one of his essential perfections, and not as an accidental or an occasional affection; and thus he is set infinitely above the gods of the heathen, those imaginary creations of the perverted imaginations of corrupt men, whose benevolence was occasional, limited, and apt to be disturbed by contrary passions.

Such were the best views of pagans; but to us a being of a far different character is manifested as our Creator

and Lord. One of his appropriate and distinguishing names, as proclaimed by himself, signifies "The gracious One" and imports goodness in the principle; and another," The all-sufficient and all-bountiful pourer forth of all good;" and expresses goodness in action.

Another interesting view of this attribute is, that the goodness of God is efficient and inexhaustible; it reaches every fit case, it supplies all possible want; and "endureth forever."

Hence the Talmudists explain eel shaddai in Gen. 17:1, by "in aeternum sufficiens sum" I am the eternally all-sufficient. Like his emblem, the sun, which sheds his rays upon the surrounding worlds, and enlightens and cherishes the whole creation without being diminished in splendor, he imparts without being exhausted, and, ever giving, has yet infinitely more to give.

A third and equally important representation is, that he takes plea-sure in the exercise of

benevolence; that "he delights in mercy." It is not wrung from him with reluctance; it is not stintedly measured out, it is not coldly imparted. God saw the works he had made, that "they were good"with an evident gratification and delight in what he had imparted to a world "full of his goodness," and into which sin and misery had not entered. "He is rich to all that call upon him;- he giveth liberally and upbraideth not;- exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think." It is

under these views, that the Scriptures afford so much encouragement to prayer, and lay so strong a ground for that absolute trust in God, which they enjoin as one of our highest duties, as it is the source of our greatest comfort.

Another illustration of the Divine goodness, and which is also peculiar to the Scriptures, is, that nothing, if capable of happiness, comes immediately from his forming hands without being placed in circumstances of positive

felicity. By heathens, acquainted only with a state of things in which much misery is suffered, this view of the Divine goodness could not be taken. They could not but suppose either many gods, some benevolent; and others, and the greater number, of an opposite character; or one, in whose nature no small proportion of malevolence was intermixed with milder sentiments. The Scriptures, on the contrary, represent misery as brought into the world by the fault of creatures; and that

otherwise it had never entered. When God made the world, he made it good; when he made man, he made him happy, with power to remain so.

He sows good seed in his field, and if tares spring up, "an enemy hath done this." This is the doctrine of inspiration. Finally, the Scriptures, upon this lapse of man, and the introduction of natural and moral evil, represent God as establishing an order of perfectly sufficient means to remedy both. One of his names is therefore S&OJ*

goel, "the Redeemer," and another, run, bonah, "the Restorer." The means by which he justifies these titles, display his goodness with such peculiar eminence, that they are called "the riches of his grace" and sometimes "the riches of his glory." By the incarnation and sacrificial death of the Son of God, he became the "goel,"

the kinsman, and "Redeemer" of mankind; he bought back and "restored" the forfeited inheritance of happiness, present and eternal, into

the human family, and placed it again within the reach of every human being. In anticipation of this propitiation, the first offender was forgiven and raised to eternal life, and the same mercy has been promised to all his descendants.

No man perishes finally but by his own refusal of the mercy of his God. And though the restoration of individuals is not at once followed by the removal of the natu ral evils of pain, death, &c; for had the whole race of man accepted

the offered grace, they would not, in this present state, have been removed; yet beyond a short life on earth these evils are not extended, and, even in this life, they are made the means of moral ends, tending to a higher moral perfection, and greater happiness in another.

Such are the views of the Divine goodness as unfolded in the Scriptures; views of the utmost importance in an inquiry into the proofs of this attribute of the Divine nature, which are afforded

by the actual circumstances of the world. Independent of their aid, no proper estimate can be taken of the sum of evil, which actually exists; nor of its bearing upon the Divine character. On these subjects there have been conflicting opinions; and the principal reason has been, that many per-sons on both sides, those who have impugned the goodness of God, and those who have defended it against objections taken from the existence of evil, have too often made the question a subject of pure

"natural theology," and have therefore necessarily formed their conclusions on a partial and most defective view of the case. This is not indeed a subject for natural theology. It is absurd to make it so; and the best writers have either been pressed with the insuperable difficulties which have arisen from excluding the light which revelation throws upon the state of man in this world, and his connection with another; or, like Paley, they have burst the self-inflicted restraints, and confessed "that when we let in

religious considerations, we let in light upon the difficulties of nature."

With respect to the illustrations of the Divine goodness which are presented in the natural and moral world, there are extremes of opinion on both sides. The views of some are too gloomy, and shut out much of the evidences of the Divine benignity: others embrace a system of Optimism, and exclude, on the other hand, the manifestations of the Divine justice and the retributive character of the

universal Governor. The Scriptures enable us to adjust these extremes, and to give to God the glory of an absolute goodness, without limiting its tenderness by severity, or diminishing its majesty by weakness.

The dark side of the actual state of the world and of man, its inhabitant, has often, for insidious purposes, been very deeply shadowed. - The facts alleged may indeed be generally admitted.

The globe, as the residence of man, has its

inconveniencies and positive evils; its variable, and often pernicious climates; its earthquakes, volcanoes, tempests, and inundations; its sterility in some places, which wears down man with labor; its exuberance of vegetable and animal life in others, which generates disease or gives birth to annoying and destructive animals. The diseases of the human race; their short life and painful dissolution; their general poverty; their universal sufferings and cares; the distractions of civil society; oppressions, frauds, and

wrongs; must all be acknowledged. To these may be added the sufferings and death of animals, and the universal war carried on between different creatures throughout the earth. This enumeration of evils might, indeed, be greatly enlarged without exaggeration.

But this is not the only view to be taken. It must be combined with others equally obvious; there are lights as well as shadows in the scene, and the darkest masses which it presents

are mingled with bright and joyous colors.

For, as Paley has observed, "In a vast plurality of instances, in which contrivance is perceived, the design of the contrivance is beneficial.

"When God created the human species, either he wished their happiness, or he wished their misery, or he was indifferent and unconcerned about either.

"If he had wished our misery, he might have made sure of his purpose, by forming our senses to be

so many sores and pains to us, as they are now instruments of gratification and enjoyment: or by placing us amidst objects so ill suited to our perceptions as to have continually offended us, instead of ministering to our refreshment and delight. He might have made, for example, everything we tasted, bitter; everything we saw, loathsome; everything we touched, a sting; every smell, a stench; and every sound, a discord.

"If he had been indifferent about our happiness or misery, we must impute to our good fortune, (as all design by this supposition is excluded,) both the capacity of our senses to receive pleasure, and the supply of external objects fitted to produce it.

"But either of these, and still more both of them, being too much to be attributed to accident, nothing remains but the first supposition, that God, when he created the human species, wished their happiness; and made

for them the provision which he has made, with that view and for that purpose.

"The same argument may be proposed in different terms, thus;- Contrivance proves design; and the predominant tendency of the contrivance indicates the disposition of the designer. The world abounds with contrivances; and all the contrivances which we are acquainted with, are directed to beneficial purposes. Evil no doubt exists, but is never, that we can perceive, the

object of contrivance. Teeth are contrived to eat, not to ache; their aching now and then is incidental to the contrivance, perhaps inseparable from it; or even, if you will, let it be called a defect in the contrivance; but it is not the object of it. - This is a distinction which well deserves to be attended to. In describing implements of husbandry, you would hardly say of the sickle, that it is made to cut the reaper's hand, though, from the construction of the instrument, and the manner of using it, this

mischief often follows. But if you had occasion to describe instruments of torture or execution, this engine, you would say, is to extend the sinews: this to dislocate the joints; this to break the bones; this to scorch the soles of the feet. Here pain and misery are the very objects of the contrivance. Now, nothing of this sort is to be found in the works of nature. We never discover a train of contrivance to bring about an evil purpose. No anatomist ever discovered a system of organization calculated to produce pain

and disease; or, in explaining the parts of the human body ever said, this is to irritate; this to inflame; this duct is to convey the gravel to the kidneys; this gland to secrete the humor which forms the gout. If by chance he come at a part of which he knows not the use, the most he can say is, that it is useless: no one ever suspects that it is put there to incommode, to annoy, or to torment." (Natural Theology.) The chief exceptions to this are those of venomous animals, and of animals

preying upon one another; on the first of which it has been remarked, not only that the number of venomous creatures is few, but that "the animal itself being regarded, the faculty complained of is good; being conducive, in all cases, to the defense of the animal; in some cases, to the subduing of its prey; and in some probably to the killing of it, when caught, by a mortal wound inflicted in the passage to the stomach, which may be no less merciful to the victim, than salutary to the devourer. In the viper, for

instance, the poisonous fang may do that which, in other animals of prey, is done by the crush of the teeth. Frogs and mice might be swallowed alive without it.

"The second case, namely, that of animals devouring one another, furnishes a consideration of much larger extent. To judge whether, as a general provision, this can be deemed an evil, even so far as we understand its consequences, which probably is a partial understanding, the

following reflections are fit to be attended to:-

"1. Immortality upon this earth is out of the question. Without death there could be no generation, no parental relation, that is, as things are constituted, no animal happiness. The particular duration of life, assigned to different animals, can form no part of the objection; because whatever that duration be, while it remains finite and limited, it may always be asked, why is it no longer? The natural age of different animals varies from a

single day to a century of years. No account can be given of this; nor could any be given, whatever other proportion of life had obtained among them.

"The term, then, of life in different animals, being the same as it is, he question is, what mode of taking it away is the best even for the animal itself.

"Now, according to the established order of nature, (which we must suppose to prevail, or we cannot reason at all upon the subject,) the three methods by which life is usually put

an end to, are acute diseases, decay, and violence. The simple and natural life of brutes is not often visited by acute distempers; nor could it be deemed an improvement of their lot if they were. Let it be considered, therefore, in what a condition of suffering and misery a brute animal is placed, which is left to perish by decay. In human sickness or infirmity, there is the assistance of man's rational fellow creatures, if not to alleviate his pains, at least to minister to his necessities, and to supply

the place of his own activity. A brute, in his wild and natural state, does everything for himself.

When his strength, therefore, or his speed, or his limbs, or his senses fail him, he is delivered over either to absolute famine, or to the protracted wretchedness of a life slowly wasted by scarcity of food. Is it then to see the world filled with drooping, superannuated, half-starved, helpless, and unhealed animals, that you would alter the present system of pursuit and prey?

"2. This system is also to them the spring of motion and activity on both sides. The pursuit of its prey forms the employment, and appears to constitute the pleasure, of a considerable part of the animal creation. The using of the means of defense or flight, or precaution, forms also the business of another part. And even of this latter tribe we have no reason to suppose that their happiness is much molested by their fears. Their danger exists continually; and in some cases they seem to be so far

sensible of it as to provide in the best manner they can against it: but it is only when the attack is actually made upon them that they appear to suffer from it. To contemplate the insecurity of their condition with anxiety and dread, requires a degree of reflection, which (happily for themselves) they do not possess. A hare, notwithstanding the number of its dangers and its enemies, is as playful an animal as any other."

It is to be observed, that as to animals, there is still much happiness.

"The air, the earth, the water, teem with delighted existence. In a spring noon or a summer evening, on whichever side I turn my eyes, myriads of happy beings crowd upon my view. The insect youth are on the wing.' Swarms of newborn flies are trying their pinions in the air. Their sportive motions, their wanton mazes, their gratuitous activity, their continual change of place without use or purpose,

testify their joy and the exultation which they feel in their lately-discovered faculties. A bee among the flowers, in spring, is one of the cheerfullest objects that can be looked upon. Its life appears to be all enjoyment; so busy and so pleased; yet it is only a specimen of insect life, with which, by reason of the animal being half domesticated, we happen to be better acquainted than we are with that of others. The whole winged insect tribe it is probable, are equally intent upon their proper employments,

and, under every variety of constitution, gratified, and perhaps equally gratified, by the offices which the author of their nature has assigned to them. But the atmosphere is not the only scene of enjoyment for the insect race. Plants are covered with aphides, greedily sucking their juices, and constantly, as it should seem, in the act of sucking. It cannot be doubted but that this is a state of gratification. What else should fix them so close to the operation, and so long? Other species are running about with an

alacrity in their motions which carries with it every mark of pleasure. Large patches of ground are sometimes half covered with these brisk and sprightly natures. If we look to what the waters produce, shoals of the fry of fish frequent the margins of rivers, of lakes, and of the sea itself.

These are so happy that they know not what to do with themselves. Their attitudes, their vivacity, their leaps out of the water, their frolics in it, (which I have noticed a thousand

times with equal attention and amusement,) all conduce to show their excess of spirits, and are simply the effects of that excess.

"At this moment, in every given moment of time, how many myriads of animals are eating their food, gratifying their appetites, ruminating in their holes, accomplishing their wishes, pursuing their pleasures, taking their pastimes! In each individual how many things must go right for it to be at ease; yet how large

a proportion out of every species are so in every assignable instant!

Throughout the whole of life, as it is diffused in nature, and as far as we are acquainted with it, looking to the average of sensations, the plurality and the preponderancy is in favor of happiness by a vast excess. In our own species, in which perhaps the assertion may be more questionable than in any other, the prepollency of good over evil, of health for example, and ease, over pain and distress, is

evinced by the very notice which calamities excite. What inquiries do the sickness of our friends produce! What conversation their misfortunes! This shows that the common course of things is in favor of happiness; that happiness is the rule, misery the exception. Were the order reversed, our attention would be called to examples of health and competency instead of disease and want." (Paley's Natural Theology.) Various alleviations of positive evils, and their being

connected with beneficial ends, are also to be taken into consideration. Pain teaches vigilance and caution, and renders its remission in a state of health a source of higher enjoyment. For numerous diseases also, remedies are, by the providence of God, and his blessing upon the researches of man, established. The process of mortal diseases has the effect of mitigating the natural horror we have of death. Sorrows and separations are smoothed by time. The necessity of labor obliges us to occupy

time usefully, which is both a source of enjoyment, and the means of preventing much mischief in a world of corrupt and ill-inclined men; and familiarity and habit render many circumstances and inconveniences tolerable, which, at first sight, we conceive to be necessarily the sources of wretchedness. In all this, there is surely an ample proof and an adorable display of the Divine benevolence.

In considering the actual existence of evils in the

world, as it affects the question of the goodness of God, we must also make a distinction between those evils which are self-inflicted, and those which are inevitable. The question of the reconcilableness of the permission of evil with the goodness of God, will be distinctly considered; but waiving this for the moment, nothing can be more obvious than that man himself is chargeable with by far the largest share of the miseries of the present life, and that they draw no cloud over the

splendor of "universal goodness. View men collectively. Sin, as a ruling habit, is not necessary. The means of repressing its inward motions, and restraining its outward acts, are or have been furnished to all mankind; and yet were all those miseries which are the effects of voluntary vice removed, how little comparatively would remain to be complained of in the world! Oppressive governments, private wrongs, wars, and all their consequent evils, would disappear. Peace, security,

and industry, would cover the earth with fruits, in sufficient abundance for all; and for accidental wants, the helpless, sick, and aged, would find a prompt supply in the charity of others. Regulated passions, and an approving conscience would create benevolent tempers, and these would displace inward disquiet with inward peace. Disease would remain, accidents to life and limb occur, death would ensue; but diseases would in consequence of temperance be less frequent and formidable,

men would ordinarily attain a peaceful age, and sink into the grave by silent decay. Beside the removal of so many evils, how greatly would the sum of positive happiness be increased! Intellectual improvement would yield the pleasures of knowledge; arts would multiply the comforts, and mitigate many of the most wasting toils of life; general benevolence would unite men in warm affections and friendships, productive of innumerable reciprocal offices of kindness; piety would crown all with the

pleasures of devotion, the removal of the fear of death, and the hope of a still better state of being. All this is possible. If it is not actual, it is the fault of the human race, not of their Maker and Redeemer; and his goodness is not, therefore, to be questioned, because they are perverse.

But let the world remain as it is, with all its self-inflicted evils, and let the case of an individual only be considered, with reference to the number of existing evils, from which, by the merciful provision of

the grace of God he may entirely escape, and of those which it is put into his power to mitigate, and even to convert to his benefit. It cannot be doubted as to any individual around us, but that he may escape from the practice and the consequence of every kind of vice, and experience the renewing effects of Christianity-that he may be justified by faith, adopted into the family of God, receive the hallowing influences of the Holy Ghost, and henceforth walk, not after the flesh,

but after the Spirit. Why do men who profess to believe in Christianity, when employed in writing systems of "Natural Theology," which oblige them to reason on the Divine goodness, and to meet objections to it, forget this, or transfer to some other branch of theology what is so vital to their own argument? Here the benevolence of God to man comes forth in all its brightness, and throws its illustrations upon his dealings with man. What, in this case, would be the quantum of evil left to be

suffered by this individual, morally so restored and so regenerated? No evils, which are the consequences of personal vice, often a long and fearful train. No inward disquiet, the effect of guilty or foolish passions, another pregnant source of misery. No restless pining of spirit after an unknown good, creating a distaste to present innocent enjoyments-he has found that good in the favor and friendship of God. No discontent with the allotments of Providence - he has been taught a

peaceful submission. No irritable restlessness under his sufferings and sorrows, - "in patience he possesses his soul." No fearful apprehension of the future- he knows that there is a guiding eye, and a supporting hand above, employed in all his concerns. No tormenting anxiety as to life or death - "he has a lively hope" of an inheritance in heaven. What then of evil remains to him but the common afflictions of life, all of which he feels, but does not sink under, and which, as they exercise, improve his

virtues, and by rendering them more exemplary and influential to others, are converted into ultimate benefits. Into this state any individual may be raised; and what is thus made possible to us by Divine goodness is of that attribute an adorable manifestation.

These views, however, while they remove the weight of any objections which may be made to the benevolence of the Divine character, taken from the existence of actual evils in the world, are at as great a

distance as possible from that theory on this subject which has been denominated Optimism. This opinion is, briefly, not that the present system of being is the best that might be conceived; but the best which the nature of things would admit of. That between not creating at all, and creating material, and sentient, and rational beings, as we find them now circumstanced, and with their present qualities, there was no choice. Accordingly, with respect to natural evils, the Optimists appear to have

revived the opinion of the oriental and Grecian schools, that matter has in it an inherent defect and tendency to disorder, which baffled the skill of the great Artificer himself to form it into a perfect world; and that moral evil as necessarily follows from finite, and therefore imperfect, natures. No imputation, they infer, can be cast upon the Creator, whose goodness, they contend, is abundantly manifest in correcting many of these evils by skilful contrivances, and rendering them, in

numerous instances, the occasion of good. Thus the storm, the earthquake, and the volcano, in the natural world, though necessary consequences of imperfection in the very nature of matter, are rendered by their effects beneficial, in the various ways which natural philosophy points out; and thus even moral evils are necessary to give birth, and to call into exercise the opposite qualities of virtue, which but for them could have no exercise; e. g. if no injuries were inflicted,

there could be no place for the virtue of forgiveness.

To this also is added the doctrine of general laws: according to which, they argue, the universe must be conducted; but that, however well set and constituted general laws may be, they will often thwart and cross one another; and that from thence particular inconveniencies will arise.

The constitution of things is, however, good on the whole, and that is all which can be required.

The apology for the Divine goodness afforded by such an hypothesis, will not be accepted by those most anxious to defend this attribute from Atheistic cavils; and though it has had its advocates among some who have professed respect for the Scriptures, yet it could never have been adopted by them, had they not been too regardless of the light which they cast upon these subjects, and been led astray by the vain project of constructing perfect systems of natural religion, and by attempting to unite

the difficulties which arise out of them, by the aid of unassisted reason. The very principle of this hypothesis, that the nature of things did not admit of a better world, implies a very unworthy notion of God. It was pardonable in the ancient advocates of the eternity of matter, to ascribe to it an essential imperfection, and inseparable evil qualities; but if the doctrine of creation in the proper sense be allowed, the omnipotence which could bring matter out of nothing, was just as able to

invest it with good as with evil qualities; and he who arranged it to produce so much beauty, harmony, security, and benefit, as we actually find in the world, could be at no loss to render his work perfect in every respect, and needed not the balancing and counteractions of one evil against another to effect his benevolent purposes. Accordingly, in fact, we find, that when God had finished his work, he pronounced it not merely good comparatively; but "very good," or good absolutely. Nor is it true

that, in the moral world, vice must necessarily exist in order to virtue; and that if we value the one, we must in the nature of things be content to take it with the other. We are told, indeed, that no forgiveness could be exercised by one human being, if injury were not inflicted by another; no meekness could be displayed, were there no anger; no long suffering were there no perverseness,

&c. But the fallacy lies in separating the acts of virtue, from the principles

of virtue. All the above instances may be reduced to one principle of benevolence, which may exist in as high a degree, when never called forth by such occasions; and express itself in acts quite as explicit, in a state of society from which sin is excluded. There are, for instance, according to Scripture, beings, called angels, who kept their first state, and have never sinned. In such a society as theirs, composed probably of different orders of intelligences, some more advanced in knowledge

than others, some with higher, and others with lower degrees of perfection, "as one star differeth from another star in glory;" how many exercises of humility and condescension; how much kind communication of knowledge by some, and meek and grateful reception of it by others; how many different ways in which a perfect purity, and a perfect love, and a perfect freedom from selfishness may display themselves! When, therefore, the principle of universal benevolence may be conceived to display itself

so strikingly, in a sinless state of society, does it need injury to call it forth in the visible form of forgiveness; anger, in the form of meekness; obstinacy, in the form of forbearance? Certainly not; and it demands no effort of mind to infer, that did such occasions exist to call for it, it would be developed, not only in the particular modes just named, but in every other.

In opposition to the view taken by such theorists, we may deny, that "whatever is, is best." We can not only

conceive of a better state of things as possible; but can show that the evils which actually exist, whether natural or moral, do not exist necessarily. It is, indeed, a proof of the Divine goodness to bring good out of evil; to make storms and earth-quakes, which are destructive to the few, beneficial to the many; to render the sins of men occasions to try, exercise, and perfect, various virtues in the good; but if man had been under an unmixed dispensation of mercy, all these ends might obviously have been accomplished,

independent of the existence of evils, natural or moral, in any degree. The true key to the whole subject is furnished by Divine revelation. Sin has entered the world. Man is under the displeasure of his Maker. Hence we see natural evils, and punitive acts of the Divine administration, not because God is not good, but because he is just as well as good. But man is not left under condemnation; through the propitiation made for his sins by the sacrifice of Christ, he is a subject of

mercy. He is under correction, not under unmingled wrath, and hence the displays of the Divine benevolence, which the world and the acts of Providence everywhere, and throughout all ages, present; and in proportion as good predominates, kindness triumphs against severity, and the Divine character is emblazoned in our sight as one that "delighteth in mercy"

To this representation of the actual relations in which the human race stand to God, and to no

other hypothesis, the state of the world exactly answers, and thus affords an obvious and powerful confirmation of the doctrine of revelation. This view has been drawn out at length by a late ingenious writer, (Gisborne's Testimony of Natural Philosophy to Christianity,) and in many instances, with great felicity of illustration. A few extracts will show the course of the argument.

The first relates to the convulsions which have

been undergone by the globe itself.

"Suppose a traveler, penetrating into regions placed beyond the sphere of his antecedent knowledge, suddenly to find himself on the confines of a city lying in ruins. Suppose the desolation, though bearing marks of ancient date, to manifest unequivocal proofs that it was not effected by the moldering hand of time, but has been the result of design and of violence.

Dislocated arches, pendant battlements, interrupted aqueducts, towers undermined and subverted, while they record the primeval strength and magnificence of the structures, proclaim the determined purpose, the persevering exertions, with which force had urged forward the work of destruction. Suppose farther, that in surveying the relics which have survived through the silent lapse of ages, the stranger discovers a present race of inhabitants, who have reared their huts amidst

the wreck. He inquires the history of the scene before him. He is informed, that the city, once distinguished by splendor, by beauty, by every arrangement and provision for the security, the accommodation, the happiness of its occupiers, was reduced to its existing situation by the deliberate resolve and act of its own lawful sovereign, the very sovereign by whom it had been erected, the emperor of that part of the world. 'Was he a ferocious tyrant?'-'No,' is the universal reply. "He was a monarch pre-eminent for

consistency, forbearance, and benignity.'-

'Was his judgment blinded, or misled, by erroneous intelligence as to the plans and proceedings of his subjects?'-'He knew everything but too well. He understood with undeviating accuracy; he decided with unimpeachable wisdom.'-'The case, then,' cries the traveler, 'is plain: the conclusion is inevitable. Your forefathers assuredly were ungrateful rebels; and thus plucked down devastation upon their city,

themselves, and their posterity.'

"The actual appearance of the globe on which we dwell, is in strict analogy with the picture of our hypothetical city.

"The earth, whatever may be the configuration, whatever may have been the perturbation or the repose, of its deep and hidden recesses, is, in its superior strata, a mass of ruins. It is not of one land, or of one clime, that the assertion is made; but of all lands, but of all climes, but of the earth universally.

Wherever the steep front of mountains discloses their interior construction; wherever native caverns and fissures reveal the disposition of the component materials; wherever the operations of the miner have pierced the successive layers, beneath which coal or metal is deposited: convulsion and disruption and disarrangement are visible. Though the smoothness and uniformity which the hand of cultivation expands over some portions of the globe, and the shaggy mantle of

thickets and forests with which nature veils other portions hitherto unreplenished and unsubdued by mankind, combine to obscure the vestiges of the shocks which our planet has experienced; as a fair skin and ornamental attire conceal internal fractures and disorganizations in the human frame: to the eye of the contemplative enquirer exploring the surface of the earth, there is apparent many a scar testifying ancient concussion and collision, and laceration; and many a wound yet

unhealed, and opening into unknown and unfathomable profundity.

"From this universal scene of confusion in the superior strata of the earth, let the student of natural theology turn his thoughts to the general works of God. What are the characteristics in which those works, however varied in their kinds, in their magnitudes, and in their purposes, obviously agree? What are the characteristics by which they are all, with manifest intention, imprinted? -

Order and harmony. In every mode of animal life, from the human frame down to the atomic and unsuspected existences in water, which have been rendered visible by the lenses of modem science; in the vegetable world, from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop by the wall; from the hyssop by the wall to the minutest plant discernible under the microscope: in the crystallizations of the mineral kingdom, of its metals, of its salts, of its spars, of its gems: in the revolution of the heavenly

bodies, and in the consequent reciprocations of day, and night, and seasons:- all is regularity. In the works of God, order and harmony are the rule; irregularity and confusion form the rare exception. Under the Divine government, an exception so portentous as that which we have been contemplating, a transformation from order and harmony to irregularity and confusion involving the integuments of a world, cannot be attributed to any circumstance which, in

common language, we term fortuitous. It proclaims itself to have been owing to a moral cause; to a moral cause demanding so vast and extraordinary an effect; a moral cause which cannot but be deeply interesting to man, cannot but be closely connected with man, the sole being on the face of this globe who is invested with moral agency; the sole being, therefore, on this globe who is subjected to moral responsibility; the sole being on this globe whose moral conduct can have had a particle of even

indirect influence on the general condition of the globe which he inhabits."

Another instance is supplied from the general deluge. After proving from a number of geological facts, that such a phenomenon must have occurred, the author observes:-

"Thus, while the exterior strata of the earth, by recording in characters unquestionable and indelible the fact of a primeval and penal deluge, attest from age to age the holiness and the justice of

God; the form and aspect of its surface are, with equal clearness, testifying from generation to generation his inherent and not less glorious attribute of mercy. For they prove that the very deluge, in its irruption employed as the instrument in his dispensation of vengeance to destroy a guilty world, was, in its recess so regulated by him as to the varying rapidity of its subsidence, so directed by him throughout all its consecutive operations, as to prepare the desolated globe for the reception of a

restored succession of inhabitants; and so to arrange the surface, as to adapt it in every climate for the sustenance of the animals, for the production of the trees and plants, and for the growth and commodious cultivation of the grain and the fruits, of which man, in that particular region, would chiefly stand in need.

"During the retirement of the waters, when a barrier of a rocky stratum, sufficiently strong for resistance, crossed the line of descent, a lake would be

in consequence formed. These memorials of the dominion of that element which had recently been so destructive, remain also as memorials of the mercy of the Restorer of nature; and by their own living splendors, and by the beauty and the grandeur of their boundaries, are the most exquisite ornaments of the scenes in which we dwell.

"Would you receive and cherish a strong impression of the extent of the mercy displayed in the renewal of the face of the

earth? Would you endeavor to render justice to the subject?

Contemplate the number of the diversified effects on the surface of the globe, which have been wrought, arranged, and harmonized by the Divine benignity through the agency of the retiring deluge: and combine in your survey of them the two connected characteristics, utility and beauty; utility to meet the necessities and multiply the comforts of man; beauty graciously superadded to cheer his eye

and delight his heart, with which the general aspect of nature is impressed. Observe the mountains, of every form and of every elevation. See them now rising in bold acclivities; now accumulated in a succession of gracefully sweeping ascents; now towering in rugged precipices; now rearing above the clouds their spiry pinnacles glittering with perpetual snow. View their sides now darkened with unbounded forests; now spreading to the sun their ample slopes covered with herbage, the summer

resorts of the flocks and the herds of subjacent regions; now scooped into sheltered concavities; now enclosing within their ranges glens green as the emerald, and watered by streams pellucid and sparkling as crystal. Pursue these glens as they unite and enlarge themselves; mark their rivulets uniting and enlarging themselves also; until the glen becomes a valley, and the valley expands into a rich vale or a spacious plain, each varied and bounded by hills, and knolls, and gentle uplands, in some parts

chiefly adapted for pasturage, in others for the plough; each intersected and refreshed by rivers flowing onward from country to country, and with streams continually augmented by collateral accessions, until they are finally lost in the ocean. There new modes of beauty are awaiting the beholder; winding shores, bold capes, rugged promontories, deeply in-dented bays, harbors penetrating far inland and protected from every blast. But in these vast and magnificent features of nature, the

gracious Author of all things has not exhausted the attractions with which he purposed to decorate inanimate objects. He pours forth beauties in detail, and with unsparing prodigality of munificence, and for whatever other reasons, for human gratification also, on the several portions, however inconsiderable, of which the larger component parts of the splendid whole consist: on the rock, on the fractured stone, on the thicket, on the single tree, on the bush, on the mossy bank, on the plant, on the

flower, on the leaf. Of all these works of his wondrous hand, he is continually varying and enhancing the attractions by the diversified modes and accessions of beauty with which he invests them, by the alterations of seasons, by the countless and rapid changes of light and shade, by the characteristic effects of the rising, the meridian, the setting sun, by the subdued glow of twilight, by the soft radiance of the moon; and by the hues, the actions, and the music of the

animal tribes with which they are peopled."

The human frame supplies another illustration:-

"Consider the human frame, naked against the elements, instantly susceptible of every external impression; relatively weak, unarmed; during infancy totally helpless; helpless again in old age; occupying a long period in its progress of growth to its destined size and strength; ungifted with swiftness to escape the wild beast of the forest; incapable, when overtaken,

of resisting him; requiring daily supplies of food, and of beverage, not merely that sense may not be ungratified, not merely that vigor may not decline, but that closely impending destruction may be delayed.

For what state does such a frame appear characteristically fitted? For what state does it appear to have been originally designed? For a state of innocence and security; for a paradisiacal state; for a state in which all elements were genial, all

external impressions innoxious; a state in which relative strength was unimportant, arms were needless; in which to be helpless was not to be insecure; in which the wild beast of the forest did not exist, or existed without hostility to man; a state in which food and beverage were either not precarious, or not habitually and speedily indispensable. Represent to yourself man as innocent, and in consequent possession of the unclouded favor of his God; and then consider whether it be probable,

that a frame thus adapted to a paradisiacal state, thus designated by characteristical indications as originally formed for a paradisiacal state, would have been selected for the world in which we live. Turn to the contrary representation; a representation the accuracy of which we have already seen the pupil of natural theology constrained, by other irresistible testimonies which she has produced, to allow: regard man as having forfeited, by transgression, the Divine

favor, and as placed by his God, with a view to ultimate possibilities of mercy and restoration, in a situation which, amidst tokens and means of grace, is at present to partake of a penal character. For such a situation; for residence on the existing earth as the appointed scene of discipline at once merciful, moral, and penal; what frame could be more wisely calculated? What frame could be more happily adjusted to receive, and to convey, and to aid, and to continue the impressions, which if mercy and

restoration are to be attained, must antecedently be wrought into the mind? Is not such a frame, in such a world, a living and a faithful witness, a constant and an energetic remembrancer, to natural reason, that man was created holy; that he fell from obedience; that his existence was continued for purposes of mercy and restoration; that he is placed in his earthly abode under a dispensation bearing the combined marks of attainable grace, and of penal discipline? Is not such a frame, in such a

world, a preparation for the reception, and a collateral evidence to the truth, of Christianity?"

The occupations of man furnish other instances:-

"One of his most general and most prominent occupations will necessarily be the cultivation of the ground. As the products drawn from the soil form the basis, not only of human subsistence, but of the wealth which expands itself in the external comforts and ornaments of social life; we should expect that,

under a dispensation comprehending means and purposes of mercy, the rewards of agriculture would be found among the least uncertain and the most liberal of the recompenses, which Providence holds forth to exertion. Experience confirms the expectation, and attests that man is not rejected of his Creator. Yet how great, how continual is the toil annexed to the effective culture of the earth! How constant the anxiety, lest redundant moisture should corrupt the seed under the clod; or

grubs and worms gnaw the root of the rising plant; or reptiles and insects devour the blade; or mildew blast the stalk; or ungenial seasons destroy the harvest! How frequently, from these, and other causes, are the unceasing labors, and the promising hopes of the husbandman terminated in bitter disappointment!

Agriculture wears not, in this our planet, the characteristics of an occupation arranged for an innocent and a fully favored race. It displays to the eye of natural theology

traces of the sentence pronounced on the first cultivator, the representative of all who were to succeed: ' Cursed is the ground for thy sake.

Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee. In sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.' It bears, in its toils and in its solicitudes, plain indications that man is a sinner.

"Observations, in substance corresponding with those which have been

stated respecting tillage, might be adduced concerning the care of flocks and herds. The return for labor in this branch of employment is, in the ordinary course of events, sufficient, as in agriculture, both to excite and sustain exertion, and to intimate the merciful benignity with which the Deity looks upon mankind. But the fatiguing superintendence, the watchful anxiety, the risks of loss by disease, by casualties, by malicious injury and depredation, and, in many countries, by

the inroads of wild beasts, conspire in their amount to enforce the truth which has been inculcated. They inscribe the page of natural theology with the Scriptural denunciation: that the labor and the pain assigned to man are consequences of transgression.

"Another of the principal occupations of man consists in the extraction of the mineral contents of the earth, and in the reduction of the metals into the states and the forms requisite for use. On the toil, the

irksomeness, and the dangers attendant on these modes of life, it is unnecessary to enlarge. They have been discussed; and have been shown to be deeply stamped with a penal character appropriate to a fallen and guilty race.

"Another and a very comprehensive range of employment consists in the fabrication of manufactures. These, in correspondence with the necessities, the reasonable desires, the self-indulgence, the ingenuity,

the caprices, and the luxury of individuals, are diversified beyond enumeration. But it may be affirmed generally concerning manufactures in extensive demand, that, in common with the occupations which have already been examined, they impose a pressure of labor, an amount of solicitude, and a risk of disappointment, such as we cannot represent to ourselves as probable in the case of beings holy in their nature, and thoroughly approved by their God. The tendency

also of such manufactures is to draw together numerous operators within a small compass; to crowd them into close workshops and inadequate habitations; to injure their health by contaminated air, and their morals by contagious society.

"Another line of exertion is constituted by trade, subdivided into its two branches, domestic traffic and foreign commerce. Both, at the same time that they are permitted in common with the modes of occupation already named

to anticipate, on the whole, by the appointment of Providence, such a recompense as proves adequate to the ordinary excitement of industry, and to the acquisition of the moderate comforts of life; are marked with the penal impress of toil, anxiety, and disappointment. Natural theology still reads the sentence, 'In the sweat of thy face, in sorrow, shalt thou eat bread.' Vigilance is frustrated by the carelessness of associates, or profit intercepted by their iniquity. Uprightness in the dealer becomes the

prey of fraud in the customer. The ship is wrecked on a distant shore, or sinks with the cargo, and with the merchant in the ocean." (Testimony of Nature, &c.)

Numerous other examples are furnished by the author, and might be easily enlarged, so abundant is the evidence; and the whole directly connects itself with the subject under consideration. The voluntary goodness of God is not impugned by the various evils which exist in the world, for we see them

accounted for by the actual corrupt state of man, and by a righteous administration, by which goodness must be controlled to be an attribute worthy of God. It would otherwise be weakness, a blind passion, and not a wisely regulated affection. On the other hand, there is clearly no reason for resorting to notions of necessity, and defects in the essential nature of created things, to prove that God is good; or, in other words, according to the hypothesis above stated, as good as the

stubbornness of matter, and the necessity that vice and misery should exist, would allow. His goodness is limited by moral, not by physical reasons, but still, considering the globe as the residence of a fallen and perverse race, that glorious attribute is heightened in its luster by this very circumstance; it arrays itself before us in all its affecting attributes of mercy, pity, long suffering, mitigation, and remission. It is goodness poured forth in the richest liberality, where moral order permits its unrestrained flow; and

it is never withheld but where the general benefit demands it. Penal acts never go beyond the rigid necessity of the case; acts of mercy rise infinitely above all desert.

The above observations all suppose moral evil actually in the world, and infecting the whole human race; but the origin of evil requires distinct consideration. How did moral evil arise, and how is this circumstance compatible with the Divine goodness 1 However these questions may be answered, it is to be

remembered that though the answer should leave some difficulties in full force, they do not press exclusively upon the Scriptures. Independent of the Bible, the fact is, that evil exists; and the Theist who admits the existence of a God of infinite goodness, has as large a share of the difficulty of reconciling facts and principles on this subject as the Christian, but with no advantage from that history of the introduction of sin into the world which is contained in the writings of Moses, and none from those alleviating

views which are afforded by their doctrine of the redemption of man by Jesus Christ.

As to the source of evil, the following are the leading opinions which have been held. Necessity, arising out of the nature of things; the Manicluean principle of duality, or the existence of a good and an evil Deity; the doctrine that God is the efficient cause or author of sin; and finally, that evil is the result of the abuse of the moral freedom with which rational and accountable creatures are

endowed. With respect to the first, as the necessity meant is independent of God, it refutes itself. For if all creatures are under the influence of this necessity, and they must be under it if it arise out of the nature of things itself, no virtue could now exist: from the moment of creation the deteriorating principle must begin its operation, and go on until all good is extinguished. Nor could there be any return from vice to virtue, since the nature of things would on that supposition be

counteracted, which is impossible.

The second is scarcely worth notice, since no one now advocates it. This heresy, which prevailed in several parts of the Christian world from the third to the sixteenth century, seems to have been a modification of the ancient Magian doctrine superadded to some of the tenets of Christianity.

Its leading principle was, that our souls were made by the good principle, and our bodies by the evil one; these two principles being,

according to mani, the founder of the sect, co-eternal and independent of each other. These notions were supposed to afford an easy explanation of the origin of evil, and on that account were zealously propagated. It was, however, overlooked by the advocates of this scheme, that it left the difficulty without any alleviation at all; for "it is just as repugnant to infinite goodness to create what it foresaw would be spoiled by another, as to create what would be spoiled by the constitution of its

nature." (King's Origin of Evil.) The dogma which makes God himself the efficient cause, or author of sin, is direct blasphemy, and it is one of those culpable extravagances into which men are sometimes betrayed by a blind attachment to some favorite theory. This notion is found in the writings of some of the most unguarded advocates of the Calvinistic hypothesis, though now generally abandoned by the writers of that school. A modern defender of Calvinism thus puts in his disclaimer, "God

is not the author of sin. A Calvinist who says so I regard as Judas, and will have no communion with him." (4) The general abandonment of this notion, so offensive and blamable, renders it unnecessary to enter into its refutation. If refutation were required it would be found in this, that the first pair who sinned were subjected to punishment for, and on account of sin; which they could not in justice have been, had not their crime been chargeable upon themselves.

(4) Scott's Remarks on the Refutation of Calvinism. - Few have been go daring, except the grosser Antinomians of ancient and modern times. The elder Calvinists, though they often made fearful approaches in their writings to this blasphemy, yet did not, openly and directly, charge God with being the author of sin. This Arminius, with great candor, acknowledges; but gives them a friendly admonition, to renounce a doctrine from which this aspersion upon the Divine character may, by a good

consequence, be deduced: a caution not uncalled for in the present day.

"Inter omnes blasphemias quse Deo impingi possunt, omnium est gravissima qua author peccati statuitur Deus: qua? ipsa non parum exaggeratur, si addatur Deum idcirco authorem esse peccati a creatura cornmissi, ut creaturam in seternum exitium, quod illi jam ante citra respectum peccati destinaverat, damnaret et deduceret: sic enim fuerit causa injustitia homini, ut ipsi feternam miseriam adferre posset.

Hanc blasphemiam nemo Deo, quern bonum concipit, impinget: quare etiam Manichaei, pessimi hcereticorum, quum causam mali bono Deo adscribere vererentur, alium Deum et aliud principium statuorunt, cui mali causam deputarent. Qua de causa, nee ullis Doctoribus reformaturum Ecclesiarurn jure impingi potest, quod Deum authorem peccati sta-tuant exprofesso; imo verissimum est illos expresse id negare, et illam caiumniam contra alios egregii confutasse.

Attamen fieri potest, ut qvis ex ignorantia aliquod doceat, ex quo bona conscquentia deducatur, Deum per illam doctrinam statui authorem peccati. Hoc si fiat, turn quidem istius doctrina? professoribus, non est impingendum quod Deum authorem pcccati faciant, sed tantum monendi ut doctrinam istam, unue id bonu consequent!a deducitur, deserant et abjiciant."

The last opinion, and that which has been generally received by theologians, is,

that moral evil is the result of a voluntary abuse of the freedom of the will in rational and moral agents; and that, as to the human race, the first pair sinned by choice, when the power to have remained innocent remained with them. "Why is there sin in the world? Because man was created in the image of God; because he is not mere matter, a clod of earth, a lump of clay, without sense or understanding, but a spirit like his Creator; a being endued not only with sense and understanding, but also with a will exerting

itself in various affections. To crown all the rest, he was endued with liberty, a power of directing his own affections and actions, a capacity of determining himself, or of choosing good and evil. Indeed, had not man been endued with this, all the rest would have been of no use. Had he not been a free, as well as an intelligent being, his understanding would have been as incapable of holiness, or any kind of virtue, as a tree or a block of marble. And having this power, a power of choosing good and evil, he chose the

latter, he chose evil. Thus ' sin entered into the world.'" (Wesley's Sermons.) This account unquestionably agrees with the history of the fact of the fall and corruption of man.

Like everything else in its kind, he was pronounced "very good;" he was placed under a law of obedience, which, if he had not had the power to observe it, would have been absurd; and that he had also the power to violate it, is equally clear from the prohibition under which he was laid, and its

accompanying penalty. The conclusion therefore is, that "God made man upright," with power to remain so, and, on the contrary, to sin and fall.

Nor was this liberty to sin inconsistent with that perfect purity and moral perfection with which he was endowed at his creation. "Many extravagant descriptions have been indulged in by some divines as to the intellectual and moral endowments of the nature of the first man, which if admitted to the full extent,

would render it difficult to conceive how he could possibly have fallen by any temptations which his circumstances allowed, or indeed how, in his case, temptation could at all exist. His state was high and glorious, but it was still a state not of reward but of trial, and his endowments and perfections were therefore suited to it. It is, indeed, perhaps going much too far to state, that all created rational beings, being finite, and endowed also with liberty of choice, must, under all circumstances, be liable to

sin. It is argued by Archbishop King, that "God, though he be omnipotent, cannot make any created being absolutely perfect; for whatever is absolutely perfect, must necessarily be self-existent: but it is included in the very notion of a creature, as such, not to exist of itself, but of God. An absolutely perfect creature, therefore, implies a contradiction; for it would be of itself, and not of itself, at the same time.

Absolute perfection, therefore, is peculiar to

God; and should he communicate his own peculiar perfection to another, that other would be God. Imperfection must therefore be tolerated in creatures, notwithstanding the Divine omnipotence and goodness;- for contradictions are no objects of power. God indeed might have refrained from acting, and continued alone self-sufficient, and perfect to all eternity; but infinite goodness would by no means allow of this; and therefore since it obliged him to produce external

things, which things could not possibly be perfect, it preferred these imperfect things to none at all; from whence it follows, that imperfection arose from the infinity of Divine goodness." (Origin of Evil.) This in part may be allowed. Imperfection must, in comparison of God, and of the creature's own capacity of improvement, remain the character of a finite being; but it is not so clear that this imperfection must, at all times, and throughout the whole course of existence, imply liability to

sin. God is free, and yet cannot "be tempted of evil." "It is impossible for God to lie;" not for want of natural freedom, but because of an absolute moral perfection. Liberty, and impeccability imply, therefore, no contradiction; and it cannot, even on rational grounds, be concluded, that a free finite moral agent may not, by the special favor of God, be placed in circumstances in which sinning is morally impossible. Revelation undoubtedly gives this promise to the faithful, in another state; a

consummation to be effected, not by destroying their natural liberty, but by improving their moral condition. This was not however the case with man at his first creation, and during his abode in paradise. His state was not that of the glorified, for it was probationary, and it was yet inconceivably advanced above the present state of man; since, with a nature unstained and uncorrupted, it was easy for him to have maintained his moral rectitude, and to have improved and confirmed it.

Obedience with him had not those clogs, and internal oppositions, and outward counteractions, as with us. It was, however, a state which required watchfulness, and effort, and prayer, and denial of the appetites and passions, since Eve fell by her appetite, and Adam by his passion: and slight as, in the first instance, every external influence which tended to depress the energy of the spiritual life, and lead man from God, might be, and easy to be resisted; it might become a step to a farther defection,

and the nucleus of a fatal habit. Thus says Bishop Butler, with his accustomed acuteness: "Mankind, and perhaps all finite creatures, from the very constitution of their nature, before habits of virtue, are deficient, and in danger of deviating from what is right: and therefore stand in need of virtuous habits, for a security against this danger. For, together with the general principle of moral understanding, we have in our inward frame various affections toward particular external objects.

These affections are naturally, and of right, subject to the government of the moral principle, as to the occasions upon which they may be gratified: as to the times, degrees and manner, in which the objects of them may be pursued: but then the principle of virtue can neither excite them, nor prevent their being excited. On the contrary, they are naturally felt, when the objects of them are present to the mind, not only before all consideration, whether they can be obtained by lawful means,

but after it is found they cannot. For the natural objects of affection continue so: the necessaries, conveniences, and pleasures of life, remain naturally desirable; though they cannot be obtained innocently; nay, though they cannot possibly be obtained at all. And when the objects of any affection whatever cannot be obtained without unlawful means, but may be obtained by them; such affection, through its being excited, and its continuance sometime in the mind, be it as innocent

as it is natural and necessary; yet cannot but be conceived to have a tendency to incline persons to venture upon such unlawful means: and, therefore, must be conceived as putting them in some danger of it. Now, what is the general security against this danger, against their actually deviating from right? As the danger is, so also must the security be, from within; from the practical principle of virtue. And the strengthening or improving this principle, considered as practical, or as a

principle of action, will lessen the danger, or increase the security against it.

And this moral principle is capable of improvement, by proper discipline and exercise: by recollecting the practical impressions which example and experience have made upon us: and, instead of following humor and mere inclination, by continually attending to the equity and right of the case, in whatever we are engaged, be it in greater or less matters, and accustoming

ourselves always to act upon it; as being itself the just and natural motive of action, and as this moral course of behavior must necessarily, under Divine government, be our final interest. Thus the principle of virtue, improved into habit, of which improvement we are thus capable, will plainly be, in proportion to the strength of it, a security against the danger which finite creatures are in, from the very nature of propension, or particular affections.

"From these things we may observe, and it will farther show this our natural and original need of being improved by discipline, how it conies to pass, that creatures made upright fall; and that those who preserve their uprightness, by so doing, raise themselves to a more secure state of virtue. To say that the former is accounted for by the nature of liberty, is to say no more than that an event's actually happening is accounted for by a mere possibility of its happening. But it seems distinctly

conceivable from the very nature of particular affections or propensions. For, suppose creatures intended for such a particular state of life for which such propensions were necessary: suppose them endued with such propensions, together with moral understanding, as well including a practical sense of virtue, as a speculative perception of it; and that all these several principles, both natural and moral, forming an inward constitution of mind, were in the most exact proportion possible;

i. e. in a proportion the most exactly adapted to their intended state of life; such creatures would be made upright, or finitely perfect. Now, particular propensions, from their very nature, must be felt, the objects of them being present; though they cannot be gratified at all, or not with the allowance of the moral principle. But if they can be gratified without its allowance, or by contradicting it; then they must be conceived to have some tendency, in how low a degree soever, yet some tendency; to induce

persons to such forbidden gratification. This tendency, in some one particular propension, may be increased, by the greater frequency of occasions naturally exciting it, than of occasions exciting others. The least voluntary indulgence in forbidden circumstances, though but in thought, will increase this wrong tendency; and may increase it farther, till, peculiar conjunctures perhaps conspiring, it becomes effect; and danger of deviating from right, ends in actual deviation from it: a danger

necessarily arising from the very nature of propension; and which, therefore, could not have been prevented, though it might have been escaped, or got innocently through. The case would be, as if we were to suppose a straight path marked out for a person, in which such a degree of attention would keep him steady: but if he would not attend in this degree, any one of a thousand objects, catching his eye, might lead him out of it. Now, it is impossible to say, how much even the first full overt act of irregularity might disorder

the inward constitution, unsettle the adjustments, and alter the proportions which formed it, and in which the uprightness of its make consisted: but repetition of irregularities would produce habits. And thus the constitution would be spoiled; and creatures made upright become corrupt and depraved in their settled character, proportionably to their repeated irregularities in occasional acts. But, on the contrary, these creatures might have improved and raised themselves to a higher and more secure

state of virtue by the contrary behavior: by steadily following the moral principle, supposed to be one part of their nature: and thus withstanding that unavoidable danger of defection, which necessarily arose from propension, the other part of it. For by thus preserving their integrity for some time, their danger would lessen: since propensions, by being inured to submit, would do it more easily and of course: and their security against this lessening danger would

increase, since the moral principle would gain additional strength by exercise; both which things are implied in the notion of virtuous habits. Thus, then, vicious indulgence is not only criminal in itself, but also depraves the inward constitution and character. And virtuous self-government is not only right in itself, but also improves the inward constitution or character: and may improve it to such a degree, that though we should suppose it impossible for particular affections to be absolutely

coincident with the moral principle; and consequently should allow, that such creatures as have been above supposed, would forever remain defectible: yet their danger of actually deviating from right may be almost infinitely lessened, and they fully fortified against what remains of it: if that may be called danger against which there is an adequate effectual security. But still, this their higher perfection may continue to consist in habits of virtue formed in a state of discipline, and this their

more complete security remain to proceed from them. And thus it is plainly conceivable, that creatures without blemish, as they came out of the hands of God, may be in danger of going wrong; and so may stand in need of the security of virtuous habits, additional to the moral principle wrought into their natures by him. That which is the ground of their danger, or their want of security, may be considered as a deficiency in them, to which virtuous habits are the natural supply. And as they are

naturally capable of being raised and improved by discipline, it may be a thing fit and requisite, that they should be placed in circumstances with an eye to it: in circumstances peculiarly fitted to be, to them, a state of discipline for their improvement in virtue" (Analogy.)

It is easy therefore to conceive, without supposing that moral liberty in all cases necessarily supposes liability to commit sin, how a perfectly pure and upright being might be

capable of disobedience, though continued submission to God and to his law was not only possible, but practicable without painful and difficult effort. To be in a state of trial, the moral, as well as the natural freedom to choose evil was essential, and as far as this fact bears upon the question of the Divine goodness, it resolves itself into this, "whether it was inconsistent with that attribute of the Divine nature, to endow man with this liberty, or in other words to place him in a

state of trial on earth, before his admission into that state from which the possibility of evil is forever excluded."

To this, unassisted reason could frame no answer. By the aid of revelation we are assured, that benevolence is so absolutely the motive and the end of the Divine providence, that thus to dispose of man, and consequently to permit his voluntary fall, is consistent with it; but in what manner it is so, is involved in obscurity: and the fact being established, we may

well be content to wait for the development of that great process which shall "justify the ways of God to man,"

without indulging in speculations which, for want of all the facts of the case before us, must always be to a great extent without foundation, and may even seriously mislead. This we know, that the entrance of sin into the world has given occasion for the tenderest displays of the Divine goodness in the gift of the great Restorer; and opened, to all who will

avail themselves of the blessing, the gate to "glory, honor, immortality, and eternal life." The observations of Doddridge on this subject, have a commendable modesty.

"It will still be demanded, why was moral evil permitted? To this it is generally answered, that it was the result of natural liberty; and it was fit that among all the other classes and orders of beings, some should be formed possessed of this, as it conduces to the harmony of the universe, and to the beautiful variety of beings

in it. Yet still it is replied, why did not God prevent this abuse of liberty? One would not willingly say, that he is not able to do it, without violating the nature of his creatures; nor is it possible that any should prove this. It is Commonly said, that he permitted it, in order to extract from thence greats good. But it may be farther queried, Could he not have produced that greater good without such a means? Could he not have secured among all his creatures universal good, and universal happiness, in full

consistency with the liberty he had given them? I acknowledge I see no way of answering this question but by saying, he had indeed a natural power of doing it, but that he saw it better not to do it, though the reasons upon which it appeared preferable to him are entirely unknown to us." (Doddridge's Lectures.) The mercy of God is not a distinct attribute of his nature, but a mode of his goodness. It is the disposition whereby he is inclined to succor those who are in misery, and to pardon those who

have offended. "In Scripture language," says Archbishop Tillotson, "it is usually set forth to us by the expressions of pity and compassion; which is an affection that causes a sensible commotion and disturbance in us, upon the apprehension of some great evil, either threatening or oppressing another; pursuant to which, God is said to be grieved and afflicted for the miseries of men. But though God be pleased in this manner to convey an idea of his mercy and tenderness to us, yet we

must take heed how we clothe the Divine nature with the infirmities of human passions: we must not measure the perfections of God by the expressions of his condescension; and because he stoops to our weakness, level him to our infirmities. When therefore God is said to pity us, or to be grieved at our afflictions, we must be careful to remove the imperfection of the passion, the commotion and disturbance that it occasions, and then we may conceive as strongly of

the Divine mercy and compassion as we please; and that it exerts itself in a very tender and affectionate manner.

"And therefore the Holy Scriptures not only tell us, that ' the Lord our God is a merciful God,' but that ' he is the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;' that he ' delights in mercy, -

waits to be gracious, - rejoices over us to do good, - and crowneth us with his loving kindness:'

to denote the greatness and continuance of this affection, they not only tell us that ' his mercy is above the heavens;' that it extends itself ' over all his works, - is laid up in store for a thousand generations, and is to endure for ever and ever:' to express the intense-ness of it, they not only tell us of the ' multitude of his tender mercies, - the sounding of his bowels,' the relentings of his heart, and 'the kindlings of his repentance;' but to give us as sensible an idea as possible of the

compassions of God, they compare them to the tenderest affections among men; to that of a father toward his children: ' As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him;' nay, to the compassion of a mother toward her infant: ' can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, she may forget,' it is possible, though very unlikely; but though a mother may become unnatural, yet God cannot prove unmerciful.

"In short, the Scriptures everywhere magnify the mercy of God, and speak of it with all possible advantage, as if the Divine nature, which does in all perfections excel every other thing, did in this perfection excel itself: and of this we have a farther conviction, if we lift but up our eyes to God, and then turning them upon ourselves, begin to consider how many evils and miseries, that every day we are exposed to, by his preventing mercy are hindered, or, when they were coming upon us,

stopped or turned another way: how oft our punishment has he deferred by his forbearing mercy, or, when it was necessary for out chastisement, mitigated and made light: how oft we have been supported in our afflictions by his comforting mercy, and visited with the light of his countenance, in the exigencies of our soul, and the gloominess of despair: how oft we have been supplied by his relieving mercy in our wants, and, when there was no hand to succor, and no soul to pity

us, his arm has been stretched out to lift us from the mire and clay, and by a providential train of events, brought about our sustenance and support: and above all, how daily, how hourly, how minutely we offend against him, and yet, by the power of his pardoning mercy, we are still alive: for considering the multitude and heinousness of our provocations, ' it is of his mercy alone that we are not consumed, and because his compassions fail not. Whoso is wise will ponder these things, and he will

understand the loving kindness of the Lord.'" (Sermons.) (3) "'And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food,' &c. Now Eve could plainly know, by her senses, that the fruit was desirable to the eye, but it was impossible she could know that it was good for food, but from the ex-ample and experiment of the serpent. It was also impossible she could know that it was desirable to make use of it, but by the example of the serpent, whom she saw from a brute become a rational and vocal creature,

as she thought by eating that fruit. The text says she saw it was good for food, and that it was desirable to make wise, and seeing does not imply conjecture or belief, but certain knowledge; knowledge founded upon evidence and proof; such proof as she had then before her eyes. And when once we are sure that she had this proof, as it is evident she had, the whole conference between her and the serpent is as rational and intelligible as anything in the whole Scriptures." (DELANY'S Dissertations.) For the

gentler emotions produced by the Spirit, these are, as the experience of all Christians testifies, the ordinary and general manner in which the Holy Spirit carries on his work in man; and, if all good desires, resolves, and aspirations, are from him, and not from our own nature, (and, if we are utterly fallen, from our own nature they cannot be,) then if any man is conscious of having ever checked good desires, and of having opposed his own convictions and better feelings, he has in himself

abundant proof of the resistibility of grace, and of the super-ability of those good inclinations which the Spirit is pleased to impart. He is equally conscious of the power of complying with them though still in the strength of grace, which yet, while it works in him "to will and to do," neither wills nor acts for him, nor even by him, as a passive instrument.

For if men were wholly and at all times passive under Divine influence; not merely in the reception of it, for all are, in that

respect, passive; but in the actings of it to practical ends, then would there be nothing to mark the difference between the righteous and the wicked but an act of God, which is utterly irreconcilable to the Scriptures. They call the former "obedient," the latter

"disobedient;" one "willing," the other "unwilling;" and promise or threaten accordingly. They attribute the destruction of the one to their refusal of the grace of God, and the salvation of

the other, as the instrumental cause, to their acceptance of it; and to urge that that personal act by which we receive the grace of Christ, detracts from his glory as our Savior by attributing our salvation to ourselves, is to speak as absurdly as if we should say that the act of obedience and faith required of the man who was commanded to stretch out his withered arm, detracted from the glory of Christ's healing virtue, by which, indeed, the power of complying with the command, and the

condition of his being healed, was imparted.

It is by such reasonings, made plausible to many minds by an affectation of metaphysical depth and subtlety, or by pretensions of magnifying the sovereignty and grace of God (often, we doubt not, very sincere) that the theory of election and reprobation, as held by the followers of Calvin with some shades of difference, but in all substantially the same, has had currency given to it in the Church of Christ in these latter ages.

How unsound and how contrary to the Scriptures they are, may appear from that brief refutation of them just given; but I repeat what was said above, that we are never to forget that this system has generally had interwoven with it many of the most vital points of Christianity. It is this which has kept it in existence; for otherwise it had never, probably, held itself up against the opposing evidence of so many plain scriptures, and that sense of the benevolence and equity of God, which his own

revelations, as well as natural reason, has riveted in the convictions of mankind. In one respect the Calvinistic and the Socinian schemes have tacitly confessed the evidence of the word of God to be against them, The latter has shrunk from the letter and common sense interpretation of Scripture within the clouds raised by a licentious criticism; the other has chosen rather to find refuge in the mists of metaphysical theories. Nothing is, however, here meant by this juxtaposition

of theories, so contrary to each other, but that both thus confess, that the prima facie evidence afforded by the word of God is not in their favor. If we intended more by thus naming on the same page systems so opposite, one of which, with all its faults, contains all that truth by which men may be saved, while the other excludes it, "we should offend against the generation of the children of GOD."

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27 ATTRIBUTES OF GOD - HOLINESS

In creatures, holiness is conformity to the will of God, as expressed in his laws, and consists in abstinence from everything which has been comprehended under the general term of sin, and in the habit and practice of righteousness. Both these terms are properly understood to include various principles, affections, and acts, which, considered separately, are regarded as vices or virtues; and, collectively, as

constituting a holy or a polluted character. Our conception of holiness in creatures, both in its negative and its positive import, is therefore explicit; it is determined by the will of God. But when we speak of God, we speak of a Being who is a law to himself, and whose conduct cannot be referred to a higher authority than his own. This circumstance has given rise to various opinions on the subject of the holiness of the Divine Being, and to different modes of stating this glorious attribute of his

moral nature. But without conducting the reader into the profitless question, whether there is a fixed and unalterable nature and fitness of things, independent of the Divine will on the one hand; or on the other, whether good and evil have their foundation, not in the nature of things, but only in the Divine will, which makes them such, there is a method, less direct it may be, but more satisfactory, of assisting our thoughts on this subject.

It is certain that various affections and actions have been enjoined upon all rational creatures under the general name of righteousness, and that their contraries have been prohibited. It is a matter also of constant experience and observation, that the good of society is promoted only by the one, and injured by the other; and also that every individual derives, by the very constitution of his nature, benefit and happiness from rectitude; injury and misery from vice. This constitution of human

nature is therefore an indication, that the Maker and Ruler of men formed them with the intent that they should avoid vice, and practice virtue; and that the former is the object of his aversion, the latter of his regard. On this principle all the laws, which in his legislative character almighty God has enacted for the government of mankind, have been constructed. "The law is holy, and the commandment holy, just, and good." In the administration of the world, where God is so

often seen in his judicial capacity, the punishments which are inflicted, indirectly or immediately upon men, clearly tend to discourage and prevent the practice of evil. "Above all, the Gospel, that last and most perfect revelation of the Divine will, instead of giving the professors of it any allowance to sin, because grace has abounded, (which is an injurious imputation cast upon it by ignorant and impious minds,) its chief design is to establish that great principle, God's moral purity, and to

manifest his abhorrence of sin, and inviolable regard to purity and virtue in his reasonable creatures. It was for this he sent his Son into the world to turn men from their iniquities, and bring them back to the paths of righteousness. For this, the blessed Jesus submitted to the deepest humiliations and most grievous sufferings. He gave himself (as St. Paul speaks) for his Church, that he might sanctify and cleanse it, that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, but

that it should be holy and without blemish: or, as it is elsewhere expressed, he gave himself for us, to redeem us from our iniquities, and to purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. In all this he is said to have done the will of his Father, and glorified him, that is, restored and promoted in the world, the cause of virtue and righteousness, which is the glory of God. And his life was the visible image of the Divine sanctity, proposed as a familiar example to mankind, for he was holy,

harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. He did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. And as Christianity appears, by the character of its author, and by his actions and sufferings, to be a designed evidence of the holiness of God, or of his aversion to sin, and his gracious desire to turn men from it, so the institution itself is perfectly pure, it contains the clearest and most lively descriptions of moral virtue, and the strongest motives to the practice of it. It promises, as from God, the kindest

assistance to men, for making the Gospel effectual to renew them in the spirit of their minds, and to reform their lives, by his Spirit sent down from heaven, on purpose to convince the world of sin, and righteousness, and judgment. To enlighten them who were in darkness, and turn the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to strengthen its converts to true religion, unto all obedience and long suffering, and patience, to enable them to resist temptation, to abound in the fruits of righteousness,

and perfect holiness in the fear of God." (Abernethy's Sermons.)

Since, then, it is so manifest, that "the Lord loveth righteousness, and hateth iniquity," it must be necessarily concluded, that this preference of the one, and hatred of the other, flow from some principle in his very nature. "That he is the righteous Lord. Of purer eyes than to behold evil, -

one who cannot look upon iniquity." This principle is holiness, an attribute, which, in the most

emphatic manner, is assumed by himself, and attributed to him, both by adoring angels in their choirs, and by inspired saints in their worship. He is, by his own designation, "the holy one of Israel;" the seraphs in the vision of the prophet, cry continually, "holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory" thus summing up all his glories in this sole moral perfection. The language of the sanctuary on earth is borrowed from that of heaven. "Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and

glorify thy name, for thou only art holy."

If then there is this principle in the Divine mind, which leads him to prescribe, love, and reward truth, justice, benevolence, and every other virtuous affection and habit in his creatures which we sum up in the term holiness; and to forbid, restrain, and punish their opposites; that principle being essential in him, a part of his very nature and Godhead, must be the spring and guide of his own conduct; and thus we conceive without

difficulty of the essential rectitude or holiness of the Divine nature, and the absolutely pure, and righteous character of his administration: "In him there can be no malice, or envy, or hatred, or revenge, or pride, or cruelty, or tyranny, or injustice, or falsehood, or unfaithfulness; and if there be any thing beside which implies sin, and vice, and moral imperfection, holiness signifies that the Divine nature is at an infinite distance from it." (Tillotson.) Nor are we only to conceive of this quality

negatively, but positively also, as "the actual, perpetual rectitude of all his volitions, and all the works and actions which are consequent thereupon; and an eternal propension thereto, and love thereof, by which it is altogether impossible to that will that it should ever vary." (Howe.) This attribute of holiness, exhibits itself in two great branches, justice and truth, which are sometimes also treated of as separate attributes.

Justice, in its principle, is holiness, and is often

expressed by the term righteousness; but when it relates to matters of government, the universal rectitude of the Divine nature shows itself in inflexible regard to what is right, and in an opposition to wrong, which cannot be warped or altered in any degree whatever. "Just and right is he." Justice in God, when it is not regarded as universal, but particular, is either legislative or judicial.

Legislative justice determines man's duty, and binds him to the,

performance of it, and also defines the rewards and punishments, which shall be due upon the creature's obedience, or disobedience. This branch of Divine justice has many illustrations in Scripture. The principle of it is, that absolute right which God has to the entire and perpetual obedience of the creatures which he has made. This right is unquestionable, and in pursuance of it, all moral agents are placed under law, and are subject to rewards or punishments. None are excepted. Those

who have not God's revealed law, have a law "written on their hearts," and are "a law unto themselves." The original law of obedience, given to man, was a law not to the first man, but to the whole human race; for if, as the apostle has laid it down, "the whole world" comprising both Jews and Gentiles, is "guilty before God," then the whole world is under a law of obedience. In this respect God is just in asserting his own right to be obeyed, and in claiming, from the creature he has made and

preserved, the obedience, which in strict righteousness he owes; but this claim is strictly limited, and never goes beyond justice into rigor. "He is not a hard master, reaping where he has not sown, and gathering where he has not strewed." His law is however unchangeable in its demand upon man for universal obedience, because man is considered in it as a creature capable of yielding that obedience; but when the human race became corrupt, means of pardon, consistent with

righteous government, were introduced, by the atonement for sin made by the death of Jesus Christ, received by faith; and supernatural aid was put within their reach, by which the evil of their nature might be removed, and the disposition and the power to obey the law of God imparted. The case of heathen nations to whom the Gospel is not yet preached, may hereafter be considered. It involves some difficulties, but it is enough for us to know, that "the Judge of the whole earth will do right;" and

that this shall l be made apparent to all creatures, when the facts of the whole case shall be disclosed, "in the day of the revelation of Jesus Christ."

Judicial justice, more generally termed distributive justice, is that which respects rewards and punishments. God renders to men according to their works. This branch of justice is said to be remunerative, or praemiative, when he rewards the obedient; and vindictive, when he punishes the guilty. With

respect to the first, it is indeed reward, properly speaking, not of debt, but of grace; for, antecedently, God cannot be a debtor to his creatures; but since he binds himself by engagements in his law, "this do and thou shalt live," express or tacit, or attaches a particular promise of reward to some particular duty, it becomes a part of justice to perform the engagement. On this principle also, St. Paul says, Heb. 6:10, "God is not unrighteous to forget your work, and labor of love. And if we confess our sins,

he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." "Even this has justice in it. It is upon one account, the highest act of mercy imaginable, considering with what liberty and freedom the course and method were settled, wherein sins come to be pardoned: but it is an act of justice also, inasmuch as it is the observation of a method to which he had bound himself, and from which afterward, therefore, he cannot depart, cannot vary." (Howe's Post. Works.)

Vindictive or punitive justice, consists in the infliction of punishment. It renders the punishment of unpardoned sin certain, so that no criminal shall escape; and it guarantees the exact proportion of punishment to the nature and circumstances of the offence. Both these circumstances are marked in numerous passages of Scripture, the testimony of which on this subject may be summed up in the words of Elihu: "for the work of a man shall he render unto him, and cause every man to find according to his

ways, yea, surely God will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert judgment."

What is called commutative justice, relates to the exchange of one thing for another of equal value, and is called forth by contracts, bargains, and similar transactions among men; but this branch of justice belongs not to God because of his dignity. "He hath no equal, there are none of the same order with him to make exchanges with him, or to transfer rights to him

for any rights transferred from him." "Our righteousness extendeth not to him, nor can man be profitable to his Maker." The whole world of creatures is challenged and humbled by the question, "Who hath given him anything, and it shall be recompensed to him again?"

Strict impartiality is, however, a prominent character in the justice of God. "There is no respect of persons with God." As on the one hand he hateth nothing which he has

made, and cannot be influenced by prejudices and prepossessions; so on the other, he can fear no one, however powerful. No being is necessary to him, even as an agent to fulfill his plans, that he should overlook his offences; no combination of beings can resist the steady and equal march of his administration. The majesty of his Godhead sets him infinitely above all such considerations.

"The Lord our God is the God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty

and terrible, which regardeth not persons, neither taketh rewards. - He accepteth not the person of princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor, for they are all the work of his hands."

There are however many circumstances in the administration of the affairs of the world, which appear irreconcilable to that strict and exact exercise of justice we have ascribed to God as the supreme Ruler. These have sometimes been urged as objections, and the writers

of systems of "natural religion" have often found it difficult to answer them. That has arisen from their excluding from such systems, as much as possible, the light of revelation; and on that account, much more than from the real difficulties of the cases adduced, it is, that their reasonings are often unsatisfactory. Yet if man is, in point of fact, under a dispensation of grace and mercy, and that is now in perfect accordance with the strictest justice of God's moral government, neither

his circumstances, nor the conduct of God toward him, can ever be judged of by systems which are constructed expressly on the principle of excluding all such views as are peculiar to the Scriptures. In attempting it the cause of truth has been injured rather than served; because a feeble argument has been often wielded when a powerful one was at hand; and the answer to infidel objectors has been partial, lest it should be said that the full and sufficient reply was furnished, not by human reason, but by the

reason, the wisdom of God himself as embodied in his word. This is however little better than a solemn manner of trifling with truths which so deeply concern men.

But let the two facts which respect the relations of man to God as the Governor of the world, and which stamp their character upon his administration, be both taken into account;- that God is a just Ruler, - and yet, that offending man is under a dispensation of mercy, which provides,

through the sacrifice of Christ meritoriously, and his own repentance and faith instrumentally, for his forgiveness, and for the healing of his corrupted nature; and a strong, and generally a most satisfactory light is thrown upon those cases which have been supposed most irreconcilable to an exact and righteous government.

The doctrine of a future and general judgment, which alone explains so many difficulties in the Divine administration, is grounded solely on the

doctrine of redemption. Under an administration of strict justice, punishment must have followed offence without delay. This is indicated in the sanction of the first law, "in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die," a threat which, we may learn from Scripture, would have been executed fully, but for the immediate introduction of the redeeming scheme. If we suppose the first pair to have preserved their innocence, and any of their descendants at any period to have become disobedient, they must

have borne their own iniquity; and punishment, to death and excision, must instantly have followed; for, in the case of a Divine government, where the parties are God and a creature, every sin must be considered capital, since the penalty of death is, in every case, the sentence of the Divine law against transgression. Under such an administration, no reason would seem to exist for a general judgment at the close of the world's duration. That has its reason in the circumstances of trial in

which men are placed by the introduction of a method of recovery. Justice, in connection with a sufficient atonement, admits of the suspension of punishment for offence, of long suffering, of the application of means of repentance and conversion; and that throughout the whole term of natural life. The judgment, the examination, and public exhibition of the use or abuse of this patience, and of those means, is deferred to one particular day, in which he who now offers grace shall administer

justice, strict and unsparing. This world is not the appointed place of final judgment, under the new dispensation; the space of human life on earth is not the time appointed for it; and however difficult it may be, without taking these things into consideration, to trace the manifestations of justice in God's moral government, or to reconcile certain circumstances to the character of a righteous governor, by their aid the difficulty is removed. Justice, as the principle of his administration, has a

sufficiently awful manifestation in the miseries which, in this life, are attached to vice; in the sorrows and sufferings to which a corrupted race is subjected; and, above all, in the satisfaction exacted from the Son of God himself, as the price of human pardon: but since the final punishment of persevering and obstinate offenders is, by God's own proclamation, postponed to "a day appointed, in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained," and since also the final

rewards of the reconciled and recovered part of mankind are equally delayed, it is folly to look for a perfect exercise of justice in the present state.

We may learn therefore from this,-

1. That it is no impeachment of a righteous government, that external prosperity should be the lot of great offenders. It may be part of a gracious administration to bring them to repentance by favor, or it may be designed to make their fall and final

punishment more marked; or it may be intended to teach the important lesson of the slight value of outward advantages, separate from holy habits and a thankful mind.

2. That it is not inconsistent with rectitude, that even those who are forgiven and reconciled, those who are become dear to God, should be afflicted and oppressed, since their defects and omissions may require chastisement, and since also these are made the means of their excelling in virtue, of aiding their

heavenly mindedness, and of qualifying them for a better state.

3. That as the administration under which man is placed is one of grace in harmony with justice, the dispensation of what is matter of pure favor, may have great variety and be even very unequal without any impeachment of justice. The parable of the laborers in the vineyard seems designed to illustrate this. To all God will be able, at the reckoning at the close of the day, to say,

"I do thee no wrong;" no principle of justice will be violated; it will then appear that "he reaps not where he has not sown." But the other principle will have been as strikingly made manifest,

"Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own?"

With nations the case is otherwise. Their rewards and punishments being of a civil nature, may be fully administered in this life, and, as bodies politic, they have no posthumous existence.

Reward and retribution, in their case, have been therefore in all ages visible and striking; and, in the conduct of the great Ruler to them, "his judgments" are said to be "abroad in the earth." In succession, every vicious nation has perished; and always by means so marked, and often so singular, as to bear upon them a broad and legible punitive character. With collective bodies of men, indeed, the government of God in this world is greatly concerned; and that both in their civil and religious character;

with Churches, so to speak, as well as with states; and, in consequence, the cases of individuals, as all cannot be of equal guilt or innocence, must often be mixed and confounded. These apparent, and sometimes, per-haps, from the operation of a general system, real irregularities, can be compensated to the good, or overtaken as to the wicked, in their personal character in another state, to which we are constantly directed to look forward, as to the great and ample comment upon all that is obscure in this.

For the discoveries of the word of God as to this attribute of the Divine nature, we owe the most grateful acknowledgments to its Author. Without this revelation, indeed, the conceptions which heathens form of the justice with which the world is administered, are exceedingly imperfect and unsettled. The course of the world is to them a flow without a direction, movement without control; and gloom and impatience must often be the result: (5) taught as we are, we see nothing loose or disjointed

in the system. A firm hand grasps and controls and directs the whole. This governing power is also manifested to us as our friend, our father, and our God, delighting in mercy, and resorting only to severity when we ourselves oblige the reluctant measure. On these firm principles of justice and mercy, truth and goodness, everything in private as well as public is conducted; and from these stable foundations, no change, no convulsion, can shake off the vast frame of human interests and concerns.

(5) The accomplished Quinctilian may be given as an instance of this, and also of what the apostle calls their sorrowing "without hope." In pathetically lamenting the death of his wife and sons, he tells us, that he had lost all taste for study, and that every good parent would condemn him, if he employed his tongue for any other purpose than to accuse the gods, and testify against a Providence. "Quis enim bonus parens mihi ignoscat, ac non oderit hanc animi inei firmitatem, si quis in me est alius usus

vocis, quam ut incusem deos, superstes omnium meorum, nullam terras despicere providentiam tester?" (Instit. Lib. 6.)

Allied to justice, as justice is allied to holiness, is the truth of God, which manifestation of the moral character of God has also an eminent place in the inspired volume. His paths are said to be "mercy and truth," - his words, ways, and judgments, to be true and righteous. "His mercy is great to the heavens and his truth to the clouds. He keepeth truth forever. The

strength of Israel will not lie. It is impossible that God should lie. He is the faithful God which keepeth covenant and mercy: he abideth faithful." From these and other passages, it is plain that truth is contemplated by the sacred writers in its two great branches, veracity and faithfulness, both of which they ascribe to God, with an emphasis and vigor of phrase which show at once their belief of the facts, their trust and confidence in them, and the important place which they considered the existence of

such a being to hold in a system of revealed religion. It forms, indeed, the basis of all religion, to know the true God, and to know that that God is true. In the Bible this must of necessity be fully and satisfactorily declared, because of the other discoveries which it makes of the Divine nature. If it reveals to us as the only living and true God, a being of knowledge infinitely perfect, then he himself cannot be deceived; and his knowledge is true, because conformable to the exact and perfect reality of

things. If he is holy, without spot or defect, then his word must be conformable to his knowledge, will, and intention. On this account he cannot deceive others. In all his dealings with us, he uses a perfect sincerity, and represents things as they are, whether laws to be obeyed, or doctrines to be believed. All is perfect and absolute veracity in his communications. "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."

His faithfulness relates to his engagements, and is

confirmed to us with the same certainty as his veracity. If he enters into engagements, promises, and covenants, he acts with perfect freedom.

These are acts of grace to which he is under no compulsion, and they can never, therefore, be reluctant engagements which he would wish to violate; because they flow from a ceaseless and changeless inclination to bestow benefits, and a delight in the exercise of goodness. They can never be made in haste or

unadvisedly, for the whole case of his creatures to the end of time is before him, and no circumstances can arise which to him are new or unforeseen. He cannot want the power to fulfill his promises, because he is omnipotent; he cannot promise beyond his ability to make good, because his fullness is infinite; finally, "he cannot deny himself," because "he is not a man that he should lie, nor the son of man that he should repent;" and thus every promise which he has made is guaranteed, as well by his natural attributes of

wisdom, power, and sufficiency, as by his perfect moral rectitude. In this manner the true God stands contrasted with the "lying vanities" of the heathen deities; and in this his character of truth, the everlasting foundations of his religion are laid. That changes not, because the doctrines taught in it are in themselves true without error, and can never be displaced by new and better discoveries; it fails not, because every gracious promise must by him be accomplished; and thus the religion of the Bible

continues from age to age, and from day to day, as much a matter of personal experience as it ever was. In its doctrines it can never become an antiquated theory, for truth is eternal. In its practical application it can never become foreign to man, for it enters now, and must ever enter into his concerns, his duties, hopes, and comforts, to the end of time. We know what is true as an object of belief, because the God of truth has declared it; and we know what is faithful, and, therefore, the object of unlimited trust, because

"he is faithful that hath promised." Whether, therefore, in the language of the old divines, we consider God's word as "declaratory or promissory" declaring "how things are or how they shall be," or promising to us certain benefits, its absolute truth is confirmed to us by the truth of the Divine nature itself; it claims the undivided assent of our judgment, and the unsuspicious trust of our hearts; and presents, at once, a sure resting place for our opinions, and a

faithful object for our confidence.

Such are the adorable attributes of the ever-blessed God which are distinctly revealed to us in his own word; in addition to which there are other and more general ascriptions of excellence to him, which though, from the very greatness of the subject, and the imperfection of human conception and human language, they are vague and indeterminate, serve, for this very reason, to heighten our conceptions

of him, and to set before the humbled and awed spirit of man an overwhelming height and depth of majesty and glory.

God is perfect. We are thus taught to ascribe to him every natural and moral excellence we can conceive; and when we have done that, we are to conclude, that if any nameless and unconceived glory be necessary to complete a perfection which excludes all deficiency; which is capable of no excess; which is unalterably full and complete-it exists in him.

Every attribute in him is perfect in its kind, and is the most elevated of its kind. It is perfect in its degree, not falling in the least below the standard of the highest excellence, either in our conceptions, or those of angels, or in the possible nature of things itself. These various perfections are systematically distributed into incommunicable, as self- existence, immensity, eternity, omniscience, omnipotence, and the like, because there is nothing in creatures which could be signified by such names; no

common properties of which these could be the common terms, and therefore, they remain peculiarly and exclusively proper to God himself: and communicable, such as wisdom, goodness, holiness, justice, and truth, because, under the same names, they may be spoken of him and of us, though in a sense infinitely inferior. But all these perfections form the one glorious perfection and fullness of excellence which constitutes the Divine nature. They are not accidents, separable from

that nature, or superadded to it; but they are his very nature itself, which is and must be perfectly wise and good, holy and just, almighty and all-sufficient. This idea of positive perfection, which runs through the whole of Scripture, warrants us also to conclude, that where negative attributes are ascribed to God, they imply always a positive excellence. Immortality implies "an undecaying fullness of life;" and when God is said to be invisible, the meaning is, that he is a being of too high an

excellency, of too glorious and transcendent a nature, to be subject to the observation of sense.

God is all sufficient. This is another of those declarations of Scripture, which exalt our views of God into a mysterious, unbounded, and undefined amplitude of grandeur. It is sufficiency, absolute plenitude and fullness from himself, eternally rising out of his own perfections; for himself, so that he is all to himself, and depends upon no other being; and for all that communication,

however large and however lasting, on which the whole universe of existent creatures depends, and from which future creations, if any take place, can only be supplied. The same vast thought is expressed by St. Paul, in the phrase "all in all," which, as Howe justly observes, (Posthumous Works,) "is a most godlike phrase, wherein God doth speak of himself with Divine great-ness and majestic sense. Here is an all in ALL; an all comprehended, and an all comprehending; one

create, and the other uncreate; the former contained in the latter, and lost like a drop in the ocean, in the all-comprehending, all-pervading, all-sustaining uncreated fullness." "In him we live, and move, and have our being."

God is unsearchable. All we see or hear of him is faint and shadowy manifestation. Beyond the highest glory, there is yet an unpierced and unapproached light, a track of intellectual and moral splendor untravelled by the

thoughts of the contemplating and adoring spirits who are nearest to his throne. The manifestation of this nature of God, never fully to be revealed, because infinite, is represented as constituting the reward and the felicity of heaven. This is "to see God." This is "to be forever with the Lord." This is to behold his glory as in a glass, with unveiled face, and to be changed into his image, from glory to glory, in boundless progression and infinite approximation. Yet, after all, it will be as

true, after countless ages spent in heaven itself, as in the present state, that none by "searching can find out God," that is, "to perfection." He will then be "a God that hideth himself;" and widely as the illumination may extend, "clouds and darkness will still be round about him. - His glorious name is exalted above all blessing and praise. -

Thine, O Lord is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heaven

and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head over all. - blessed be the lord God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things; and blessed be his glorious name forever, and let the whole earth befitted with his glory. Amen and Amen."

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28 GOD - THE TRINITY IN UNITY

We now approach this great mystery of our faith, for the declaration of which

we are so exclusively indebted to the Scriptures that not only is it incapable of proof a priori; but it derives no direct confirmatory evidence from the existence, and wise and orderly arrangement, of the works of God. It stands, however, on the unshaken foundation of his own word; that testimony which he has given of himself in both Testaments; and if we see no traces of it, as of his simple being and operative perfections, in the works of his creative power and wisdom, the reason is that

creation in itself could not be the medium of manifesting, or of illustrating it. Some, it is true, have thought the trinity of Divine persons in the unity of the Godhead demonstrable by natural reason. Poiret and others, formerly, and Professor Kidd, recently, have all attempted to prove, not that this doctrine implies a contradiction, but that it cannot be denied without a contradiction; and that it is impossible but that the Divine nature should so exist. The former endeavors to prove that

neither creation, nor indeed any action in the Deity was possible, but from this tri-unity. But his arguments, were they adduced, would scarcely be considered satisfactory, even by those whose belief in the doctrine is most settled. The latter argues from notions of duration and space, which themselves have not hitherto been satisfactorily established, and if they had, would yield but slight assistance in such an investigation. This, however, may be said respecting such attempts,

that they at least show, that men, quite as eminent for strength of understanding, and logical acuteness, as any who have decried the doctrine of the trinity as irrational and contradictory, find no such opposition in it to the reason, or to the nature of things, as the latter pretend to be almost self- evident. The very opposite conclusions reached by the parties, when they reason the matter by the light of their own intellect only, is a circumstance, it is true, which lessens our confidence in pretended

rational demonstrations; but it gives neither party a right to assume anything at the expense of the other. Such failures ought, indeed, to produce in us a proper sense of the inadequacy of human powers to search the deep things of God; and they forcibly exhibit the necessity of Divine teaching in everything which relates to such subjects, and demand from us an entire docility of mind, where God himself has condescended to become our instructor.

More objectionable than the attempts which have been made to prove this mystery by mere argument, are pretensions to explain it; whether, by what logicians call immanent acts of Deity upon himself, from whence arise the relations of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; or by assuming that the trinity is the same as the three "essential primalities, or active powers in the Divine essence, power, intellect, and will," (6) for which they invent a kind of personification; or, by alleging that the three

persons are "Deus seipsum intelligens, Deus a seipso intellectus, et Deus a seipso amatus" All such hypotheses either darken the counsel they would explain, by "words without knowledge," or assume principles, which, when expanded into their full import, are wholly inconsistent with the doctrine as it is announced in the Scripture, and which their advocates have professed to receive.

(6) "Potentia, Intellectus, et Voluntas," or "Potentia, Sapientia, et Amor." -

(Campanclla, Richardus, and others,)

It is a more innocent theory, that types and symbols of the mystery of the trinity are found in various natural objects. From the fathers, many have illustrated the trinity of persons in the same Divine nature by the analogy of three or more men having each the same human nature; by the union of two natures of man in one person; by the trinity of intellectual primary faculties in the soul, power, intellect, and

will, "posse, scire, velle" which they say are not three parts of the soul,

"it being the whole soul qua potest, quce intelligit, et qua vult;" by motion, light, and heat in the sun, with many others. Of these instances, however, we may observe, that even granting them all to be philosophically true, they cannot be proofs; they are seldom, or very inapplicably illustrations; and the best use to which they have ever been put, or of which they are indeed capable, is to silence the

absurd objections which are sometimes drawn from things merely natural and finite, by answers which natural and finite things supply; though both the objections and the answers often prove, that the subject in question is too elevated and peculiar to be approached by such analogies. Of these illustrations, as they have been sometimes called, Baxter, though inclined to make too much of them, well enough observes, - "It is one thing to show in the creatures a clear demonstration of this

trinity of persons, by showing an effect that fully answered it, and another thing to show such vestigia, adumbration, or image of it, as hath those dissimilitudes which must be allowed in any created image of God is it which I am to do."

(Christian Religion.) This excellent man has been charged, perhaps a little too hastily, with adopting one of the theories given above, as his own view of the trinity, a trinity of personified attributes, rather than of real persons.

It must, however, be acknowledged, that he has given some occasion for the allegation, but his conclusion is worthy of himself, and instructive to all:-

"But for my own part, as I unfeignedly account the doctrine of the trinity the very sum and kernel of the Christian religion, (as expressed in our baptism,) and Athanasius his creed, the best explication of it that ever I read; so I think it very unmeet in these tremendous mysteries, to go farther than we have

God's own light to guide us." (Christ. Religion.) The term person has been variously taken. It signifies in ordinary language an individual substance of rational or intelligent nature. (7) In the strict philosophical sense, it has been said, two or more persons would be two or more distinct beings. If the term person were so applied to the trinity in the Godhead, a plurality of Gods would follow; while if taken in what has been called a political sense, personality would be no

more than relation, arising out of office.

Personality in God is, therefore, not to be understood in either of the above senses, if respect be paid to the testimony of Scripture. God is one being; this is admitted on both sides. But he is more than one being in three relations; for personal acts, that is, such acts as we are used to ascribe to distinct persons, and which we take most unequivocally to characterize personality, are ascribed to each. The Scripture doctrine

therefore is, that the persons are not separate, but distinct; that they "are united persons, or persons having no separate existence, and that they are so united as to be but one being, one God." In other words, that the one Divine nature exists under the personal distinction of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

(7) It is defined by Occam, "Supposition intellcctuale"

"The word person," Howe remarks, "must not be taken to signify the same thing, when spoken of God

and of ourselves." That is, not in all respects. Nevertheless it is the only word which can express the sense of those passages, in which personal acts are unequivocally ascribed to each of the Divine subsistence in the Godhead. Perhaps, however, one may be allowed to doubt whether, in all respects, the term person may not be taken to signify "the same thing" in us and in God. It is true, as before observed, that three persons among men or angels, would convey the idea of three different and

separate beings; hut it may be questioned whether this arises from anything necessarily conveyed in the idea of personality. We have been accustomed to observe personality only in connection with separate beings; but this separation seems to be but a circumstance connected with personality, and not anything which arises out of personality itself. Dr.

Waterland clearly defines the term person, as it must be understood in this controversy, to be "an intelligent agent, having

the distinct characters, I, thou, he."That one being should necessarily conclude one person only, is, however, what none can prove from the nature of things; and all that can be affirmed on the subject is, that it is so in fact among all intelligent creatures with which we are acquainted. Among them, distinct persons are only seen in separate beings, but this separation of being is clearly an accident of personality; for the circumstance of separation forms no part of the idea of personality itself, which is

confined to a capability of performing personal acts. In God, the distinct persons are represented as having a common foundation in one being: but this union also forms no part of the idea of personality, nor can be proved inconsistent with it. The manner of the union, it is granted, is incomprehensible, and so is Deity himself, and every essential attribute with which his nature is invested.

It has been said, that the term person is not used in

Scripture, and some who believe the doctrine it expresses, have objected to its use. To such it may be sufficient to reply, that provided that which is clearly stated in Scripture, be compendiously expressed by this term, and cannot so well be expressed, except by an inconvenient periphrasis, it ought to be retained. They who believe such a distinction in the Godhead as amounts to a personal distinction, will not generally be disposed to surrender a word which keeps up the force of the

Scriptural idea; and they who do not, object not to the term, but to the doctrine which it conveys. It is not, however, so clear, that there is not Scripture warrant for the term itself. Our translators so concluded, when in Heb. 1:3, they call the Son, "the express image" of the "person" of the Father. The original word is hypostasis; which was understood by the Greek fathers to signify a person, though not, it is true, exclusively so used. (8) The sense of hypostasis in this passage, must, however, be considered as

fixed by the apostle's argument, by all who allow the Divinity of the Son of God. For the Son being called "the express image" of the Father, a distinction between the Son and the Father is thus unquestionably expressed; but if there be but one God, and the Son be Divine, the distinction here expressed cannot be a distinction of essence, and must therefore be a personal one. Not from the Father's essence, but from the Father's hypostasis or person, can he be distinguished. This seems

sufficient to have warranted the use of hypostasis in the sense of person in the early Church, and to authorize the latter term in our own language. In fact, it was by the adoption of the two great theological terms homosioa and hupostasis that the early Church at length reared up impregnable barriers against the two leading heresies into which almost every modification of error as to the person of Christ may be resolved. The former, which is compounded of homos, the same, and ousia,

substance, stood opposed to the Arians, who denied that Christ was of the substance of the Father, that is, that he was truly God; the latter, when fixed in the sense of person, resisted the Sabellian scheme, which allowed the Divinity of the Son and Spirit, but denied their proper personality.

(8) "Nonnunquam hyposasis pro eo quod nos ousian dicimus et vise versa vox ousia pro eo quod nos hyposasis appellamus, ab ipsis accepta fuit." - Bishop Bull hyposasis, it

ought, however, to be observed, was used in the sense of person before the council of Nice, by many Christian writers, and, in the ancient Greek Lexicons, it is explained by oposopon, and rendered by the Latins persona.

Among the leading writers in defense of the trinity, there are some shades of difference in opinion, as to what constitutes the unity of the three persons in the Godhead. Doddridge thus expresses these leading differences among the orthodox:-

"Mr. Howe seems to suppose, that there are three distinct, eternal spirits, or distinct intelligent hypostases, each having his own distinct, singular, intelligent nature, united in such an inexplicable manner, as that upon account of their perfect harmony, consent, and affection, to which he adds their mutual self-consciousness, they may be called the one God, as properly as the different corporeal, sensitive, and intellectual natures united may be called one man.

"Dr. Waterland, Dr. A. Taylor, with the rest of the Athanasians, assert three proper distinct persons, entirely equal to, and independent upon each other, yet making up one and the same being; and that, though there may appear many things inexplicable in the scheme, it is to be charged to the weakness of our understanding, and not to the absurdity of the doctrine itself.

"Bishop Pearson, with whom Bishop Bull also agrees, is of opinion, that

though God the Father is the fountain of the Deity, the whole Divine nature is communicated from the Father to the Son, and from both to the Spirit, yet so as that the Father and the Son are not separate, nor separable from the Divinity, but do still exist in it, and are most intimately united to it. This was also Dr.

Owen's scheme." (Lectures.)

The last view appears to comport most exactly with the testimony of Scripture,

which shall be presently adduced.

Before we enter upon the examination of the Scriptural proofs of the trinity, it may be necessary to impress the reader with a sense of the importance of this revealed doctrine; and the more so as it has been a part of the subtle warfare of the enemies of this fundamental branch of the common faith, to represent it as of little consequence, or as a matter of useless speculation. Thus Dr.

Priestley, "All that can be said for it is, that the doctrine, however improbable in itself, is necessary to explain some particular texts of Scripture; and that, if it had not been for those particular texts we should have found no want of it, for there is neither any fact in nature, nor any one purpose of morals, which are the object and end of all religion, that requires it." (History of Early Opinions.)

The non-importance of the doctrine has been a favorite

subject with its opposers in all ages, that by allaying all fears in the minds of the unwary, as to the consequences of the opposite errors, they might be put off their guard, and be the more easily persuaded to part with "the faith delivered to the saints." The answer is, however, obvious.

1. The knowledge of God is fundamental to religion; and as we know nothing of him but what he has been pleased to reveal, and as these revelations have all moral ends, and are

designed to promote piety and not to gratify curiosity, all that he has revealed of himself in particular, must partake of that character of fundamental importance, which belongs to the knowledge of God in the aggregate. "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." Nothing, therefore, can disprove the fundamental importance of the trinity in unity, but that which will disprove it to be a doctrine of Scripture.

2. Dr. Priestley allows, that this doctrine "is necessary to explain some particular texts of Scripture." This alone is sufficient to mark its importance; especially as it can be shown, that these "particular texts of Scripture" comprehend a very large portion of the sacred volume; that they are scattered throughout almost all the books of both Testaments; that they are not incidentally introduced only, but solemnly laid down as revelations of the nature of God; and that they manifestly give the tone both to the thinking

and the phrase of the sacred writers on many other weighty subjects. That which is necessary to explain so many passages of holy writ, and without which, they are so incorrigibly unmeaning, that the Socinians have felt themselves obliged to submit to their evidence, or to expunge them from the inspired record, carries with it an importance of the highest character. So important, indeed, is it, upon the showing of these opposers of the truth themselves, that we can only preserve the

Scriptures by admitting it; for they, first by excepting to the genuineness of certain passages, then by questioning the inspiration of whole books, and, finally, of the greater part, if not the whole New Testament, have nearly left themselves as destitute of a revelation from God as infidels themselves. No homage more expressive has ever been paid to this doctrine, as the doctrine of the Scriptures, than the liberties thus taken with the Bible, by those who have denied it; no stronger proof can be offered of its

importance, than that the Bible cannot be interpreted upon any substituted theory, they them-selves being the judges.

3. It essentially affects our views of God as the object of our worship, whether we regard him as one in essence, and one in person, or admit that in the unity of this Godhead there are three equally Divine persons. These are two very different conceptions. Both cannot be true. The God of those who deny the trinity, is not the God of those who worship the trinity in unity,

nor on the contrary; so that one or the other worships what is "nothing in the world;" and, for any reality in the object of worship, might as well worship a pagan idol, which also, says St. Paul, "is nothing in the world." "If God be Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the duties owing to God will be duties owing to that triune distinction, which must be paid accordingly; and whoever leaves any of them out of his idea of God, comes so far short of honoring God perfectly, and of serving him in proportion to the

manifestations he has made of himself." (Waterland.) As the object of our worship is affected by our respective views on this great subject, so also is its character. We are between the extremes of pure and acceptable devotion, and of gross and offensive idolatry, and must run to one or the other. If the doctrine of the trinity be tree, then those who deny it do not worship the God of the Scriptures, but a fiction of their own framing; if it be false, the trinitarian, by paying Divine honors to the Son,

and to the Holy Ghost, is equally guilty of idolatry, though in another mode.

Now it is surely important to determine this; and which is the most likely to have fallen into this false and corrupt worship, the very prima facie evidence may determine:- the trinitarian, who has the letter, and plain, common-sense interpretation of Scripture for his warrant;- or he who confesses that he must resort to all the artifices of criticism, and boldly challenge the inspiration of an

authenticated volume, to get rid of the evidence which it exhibits against him, if taken in its first and most obvious meaning. (9) It is not now attempted to prove the Socinian heresy from the Scriptures; this has long been given up, and the main effort of all modern writers on that side has been directed to cavil at the adduced proofs of the opposite doctrine. They are as to Scripture argument, wholly on the defensive, and thus allow, at least, that they have no direct warrant for their opinions. We acknowledge,

indeed, that the charge of idolatry would lie against us, could we be proved in error; but they seem to forget, that it lies against them, should they be in error; and that they are in this error, they themselves tacitly acknowledge, if the Scriptures, which they now in great measure reject, must determine the question. On that authority, we may unhesitatingly account them idolaters, worshippers of what "is nothing in the world;" and not of the God revealed in the Bible. (1) Thus, the only

hope which is left to the Socinian, is held on the same tenure as the hope of the Deist, - the forlorn hope that the Scriptures, which he rejects, are not true; for if those texts they reject, and those books which they hold of no authority be established, then this whole charge, and its consequences, lie full against them.

(9) St. Paul says, that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God; but Dr. Priestley tells us, that this signifies nothing more than that the books were written

by good men, with the best views and designs.

(1) To this purpose, Witsius, who shows that there can be neither religion nor worship, unless the trinity be acknowledged. "Nulla etiam religio est, nisi quis verum Deurn colat; non colit verum Deum, sed cerebri sui fgmentum, qui non adorat in aequali divinitatis majestate Patrem, Filium, et Spirittim Sanctum. I nunc, et doctrinam earn ad praxin inutilem esse clama, sine qua nulla Fidei aut,

Pietatis Christiana? praxis esse potest."

4. Dr. Priestley objects, "that no fact in nature, nor any one purpose of morals, requires this doctrine." The first part of the objection is futile and trifling, if he meant that the facts of nature do not require this doctrine for their philosophical illustration; for who seeks the explication of natural phenomena in theological doctrines? But there is one view in which even right views of the facts of nature depend upon proper views

of the Godhead. All nature has a theological reason, and a theological end; and its interpretation in these respects, rests wholly upon the person and office of our Lord. All things were made by the Son and for him; a theological view of the natural world, which is large or contracted, emphatic or spiritless, according to the conceptions which we form of the Son of God, "by whom, and for whom" it was built, and is preserved. The reason why the present circumstances of the natural world are, as before

shown, neither wholly perfect, nor without large remains of original perfection; neither accordant with the condition of condemned, nor of innocent creatures; but adapted only to such a state of man as the redeeming scheme supposes; cannot, on the Socinian hypothesis, be discovered; for that redeeming scheme depends for its character upon our views of the person of Christ. Without a settled opinion on these points, we are therefore, in this respect also, without

the key to a just and full explanation of the theological character of our present residence, the world.

Another relation of the natural world to theology, lies in its duration. It was made for Christ; and the reason which determines that it shall be burned up centers in him. He is appointed judge, and shall terminate the present scene of things, by destroying the frame of the visible universe, when the probation of its inhabitants shall have expired. I beg

the reader to turn to the remarks before made on the reason of a, general judgment being found in the fact, that man is under grace and not strict law; and the argument offered to show, that if we were under a covenant of mere obedience, no cause for such an appointment, as that of a general judgment, would be obvious. If those views be correct, then the reason, both of a general judgment and the final destruction of the world, is to be found in the system of redemption, and consequently in such views

of the person of Christ, as are not found in the Socinian scheme. The conclusion therefore is, that as "to facts ill nature," even they are intimately connected, in several very important respects, which no wise man can overlook, with the doctrine of the trinity. Socinianism cannot explain the peculiar physical state, of the world as connected with a state of trial; and the general judgment, and the

"end of all things," bear no relation to its theology.

The connection of the orthodox doctrine with morals is, of course, still more direct and striking; and dim must have been that intellectual eye which could not discern that, granting to the believers in the trinity their own principles, its relation to morals is vital and essential. Whether those principles are supported by the Scripture, is another consideration. If they could be disproved, then the doctrine ought to be rejected on a higher ground than that here urged; but to attempt to push it aside, on

the pretence of its having no connection with morals, was but a very unworthy mode of veiling the case. For what are "morals," but conformity to a Divine law, which law must take its character from its author? The trinitarian scheme is essentially connected with the doctrine of atonement; and what is called the Unitarian theory necessarily excludes atonement. From this arise opposite views of God, as the Governor of the world; of the law under which we are placed; of the nature and consequences of sin,

the violation of that law; points which have an essential relation to morals, because they affect the nature of the sanctions which accompany the law of God. He who denies the doctrine of the trinity, and its necessary adjunct, the atonement, makes sin a matter of comparatively trifling moment: God is not strict to punish it; and if punishment follow, it is not eternal. Whether, under these soft and easy views of the law of God, and of its transgression by sin, morals can have an equal sanction, or human

conduct be equally restrained, are points too obvious to be argued; but a subject which involves views of the judicial character of God so opposite, and of the evil and penalty of offence, must be considered as standing in the most intimate relation with every question of morals. It is presumed, too, in the objection, that faith, or, in other words, a firm belief in the testimony of God, is no part of morality. It is, however, sufficient to place this matter in a very different light if we

recollect, that to believe is so much a command that the highest sanction is connected with it. "He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned.' Nothing, therefore, can be more important to us than to examine, with-out captiousness and the spirit of unbelief, what God hath revealed as the object of our faith, since the rejection of any revealed truth, under the influence of pride, whether of the reason or the heart; or through affectation of independence; or love of

the world; or any other corrupt motive; must be certainly visited with punishment: the law of faith having the same authority, and the same sanction as the law of works. It is, therefore, a point of duty to believe, because it is a point of obedience, and hence St. Paul speaks of "the obedience of faith." For as it has been well observed, "As to the nature of faith, it is a matter of obligation, as being that natural homage which the understanding or will pays to God in receiving and assenting to

what he reveals upon his' bare word or authority. It is a humiliation of ourselves, and a glorification of God." (Norris on Christian Prudence.) It may be added, too, that faith, which implies a submission to God, is an important branch also of discipline.

The objection, that there can be no faith where there is not sufficient evidence to command it, will not affect this conclusion. For when once the evidence of a Divine revelation is admitted, our duty to receive its doctrines does

not rest upon the rational evidence we may have of their truth; but upon the much easier and plainer evidence, that they are among the things actually revealed. He, therefore, who admits a Divine revelation, and rejects its doctrines, because he has not a satisfactory rational evidence of them, is more obviously criminal in his unbelief than he who rejects the revelation itself; for he openly debates the case with his Maker, a circumstance which indicates, in the most striking manner, a corrupt

habit of mind. It is, indeed, often pretended, that such truths are rejected, not so much on this account, as that they do not appear to be the sense of the revelation itself. But this cannot be urged by those who openly lay it down as a principle, that a true revelation can contain nothing which to them appears unreasonable; or that if it does, they are bound by the law of their nature not to admit it. Nor will it appear to be any other than an unworthy and dishonest pretence in all cases where such kinds

of criticism are resorted to, to alter the sense of a text, or to disprove its authority, as they would not allow in the case of texts supposed, by a partial construction, to favor their own opinion; or such as would be condemned by all learned and sober persons as hypercritical and violent, if applied to any other writings. It may also be added, that should any of the great qualities required in a serious and honest inquirer after truth have been uncultivated and unapplied, though a sincere conviction of the

truth of an erroneous conclusion may exist, the guilt of unbelief would not be removed by such kind of sincerity. If there has been no anxiety to be right; no prayer, earnest and devout, offered to God, to be kept from error; if an humble sense of human liability to err has not been maintained; if diligence in looking out for proofs, and patience and perseverance in inquiry, have not been exerted; if honesty in balancing evidence, and a firm resolution to embrace the truth, whatever prejudices or interests it

may contradict or oppose, have not been felt; even sincerity in believing that to be true, which in the present state of a judgment determined, probably, before all the means of information have been resorted to, and, perhaps, under the perverting influences of a worldly or carnal state of mind, may appear to be so, will be no excuse. We are under "a law of faith," and that law cannot be supposed to be so pliable and nugatory, as they who contend for the right of believing only what they please, would make it.

These observations will show the connection of the doctrine of the trinity with morals, the point denied by Dr. Priestley.

But, to leave this objection for views of a larger extent; our love to God, which is the sum of every duty, its sanctifying motive, and consequently a compendium of all true religion, is most intimately and even essentially connected with the doctrine in question. God's love to us is the ground of our love to him; and by our views of that, it must be

heightened or diminished. The love of God to man in the gift of his Son is that manifestation of it on which the Scriptures most emphatically and frequently dwell, and on which they establish our duty of loving God and one another. Now the estimate which we are to take of the love of God, must be the value of his gifts to us. His greatest gift is the gift of his Son, through whom alone we have the promise of everlasting life; but our estimate of the love which gives must be widely different, according as we

regard the gift bestowed, - as a creature, or as a Divine person, - as merely a Son of man, or as the Son of God. If the former only, it is difficult to conceive in what this love, constantly represented as "unspeakable" and astonishing, could consist. Indeed, if we suppose Christ to be a man only, on the Socinian scheme, or as an exalted creature, according to the Arians, God might be rather said to have "so loved his Son" than us, as to send him into the world, on a service so honorable, and which was

to be followed by so high and vast a reward, that he, a creature, should be advanced to universal dominion and receive universal homage as the price only of temporary sufferings, which, upon either the Socinian or Arian scheme, were not greater than those which many of his disciples endured after him, and, in many instances, not so great. (2) (2, "Equidem rem attentius perpendenti liquebit, ex hypothesi sive Sociniana, sive Ariana, Deum in hoc negptio arnorem et dilectionem

suam potius in ilium ipsum filium, quam erga nos homines ostendisse. Quid enim? Is qui Christas dicitur, ex mera Dei eudokia et beneplaoito in earn gratiam electus est, ut port brevem hie in terris Deo prasstitam obedientiam, ex puro puto homine juxta Socinistas, sive ex mera et mutabili creatura, ut Ario. manitae dicunt, Deus ipse fieret, ac divinos honores, non modo a nobis hominibus sed etiam ab ipsis angelis atque archangelis sibi tribuendos assequeretur, adeoque in alias creaturas omnes

dominium atque imperium obtineret." (Bull. Jud. Eccl, Cathol.)

For the same reason, the doctrine which denies our Lord's Divinity, diminishes the love of Christ himself, takes away its generosity and devotedness, presents it under views infinitely below those contained in the New Testament, and weakens the motives which are drawn from it to excite our gratitude and obedience. "If Christ was in the form of God, equal with God, and very God, it was then an act of infinite love

and condescension in him to become man; but if he was no more than a creature, it was no surprising condescension to embark in a work so glorious; such as being the Savior of mankind, and such as would advance him to be Lord and Judge of the world, to be admired, reverenced, and adored, both by men and angels." (Waterland's Importance.) To this it may be added, that the idea of disinterested generous love, such as the love of Christ is represented to be by the evangelists and the

apostles, cannot be supported upon any supposition but that he was properly a Divine person. As a man and as a creature only, however exalted, he would have profited by his exaltation; but, considered as Divine, Christ gained nothing. God is full and perfect-he is exalted "above blessing and praise:" and, therefore, our Lord, in that Divine nature, prays that he might be glorified with the Father, with the glory he had before. Not a glory which was new to him; not a glory heightened in its degree; but the glory which

he had with the Father "before the world was." In a manner mysterious to us, even as to his Divine nature, "he emptied himself-he humbled himself;" but in that nature he returned to a glory which he had before the world was. The whole, therefore, was in him generous disinterested love, ineffable and affecting condescension. The heresy of the Socinians and Arians totally annihilates, therefore, the true character of the love of Christ, "so that," as Dr. Sherlock well observes, "to

deny the Divinity of Christ, alters the very foundations of Christianity, and destroys all the powerful arguments of the love, humility, and condescension of our Lord, which are the peculiar motives of the Gospel." (Defence of Stillingfleet.) But it is not only in this view that the denial of the Divinity of our Lord would alter the foundation of the Christian scheme, but in others equally essential: For, 1. The doctrine of satisfaction or atonement depends upon his Divinity; and it is, therefore,

consistently denied by those who reject the former. So important, however, is the decision of this case, that the very terms of our salvation, and the ground of our hope, are affected by it.

The Arians, now however nearly extinct, admitted the doctrine of atonement, though inconsistently. "No creature could merit from God, or do works of supererogation. If it be said that God might accept it as he pleased, it may be said upon the same principle, that he might accept the

blood of bulls and of goats. Yet the apostle tells that it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sin; which words resolve the satisfaction, not merely into God's free acceptance, but into the intrinsic value of the sacrifice." (Waterland's Importance.) Hence the Scriptures so constantly connect the atonement with the character, - the very Divinity of the person suffering. It was Jehovah who was pierced, Zech. 12:11; God who purchased the Church with his own

blood, Acts 20:28. It was o Despotms the high Lord, that bought us, 2 Pet.

2:1. It was the Lord of glory that was crucified, 1 Cor. 2:8.

It is no small presumption of the impossibility of holding, with any support from the common sense of mankind, the doctrine of atonement with that of an inferior Divinity, that these opinions have so uniformly slided down into a total denial of it, and by almost all persons, except those who have retained the pure faith of the Gospel, Christ

is regarded as a man only; and no atonement, in any sense, is allowed to have been made by his death. The terms, then, of human salvation are entirely different on one scheme and on the other; and with respect to their advocates, one is "under law" the other "under grace;" one takes the cause of his own salvation into his own hands to manage it as he is able, and to plead with God, either that he is just, or that he may be justified by his own penitence and acts of obedient virtue; the other pleads the

meritorious death and intercession of his Savior, in his name and mediation makes his requests known unto God, and asks a justification by faith, and a renewal of heart by the Holy Ghost. One stands with all his offences before his Maker, and in his own person, without a mediator and advocate; the other avails himself of both. A question which involves such consequences is surely not a speculative one; but deeply practical and vital, and must be found to be so in its final issue.

2. The manner in which the evil of sin is estimated must be very different, on these views of the Divine nature respectively; and this is a consequence of a directly practical nature. Whatever lowers in men a sense of what an apostle calls "the exceeding sinfulness of sin," weakens the hatred and horror of it among men, and by consequence encourages it. In the Socinian view, transgressions of the Divine law are all regarded as venial, or, at most, to be subjected to slight and temporary punishment. In

the orthodox doctrine, sin is an evil so great in itself, so hateful to God, so injurious in its effects, so necessary to be restrained by punishment, that it dooms the offender to eternal exclusion from God, and to positive endless punishment, and could only be forgiven through a sacrifice of atonement, so extraordinary as that of the death of the Divine Son of God. By these means, forgiveness only could be promised; and the neglect of them, in order to pardon and sanctification too,

aggravates the punishment, and makes the final visitation of justice the more terrible.

3. It totally changes the character of Christian experience. Those strong and painful emotions of sorrow and alarm, which characterize the descriptions and example of repentance in the Scriptures, are totally incongruous and uncalled for, upon the theory which denies man's lost condition, and his salvation by a process of redemption. faith, too, undergoes an

essential change. It is no longer faith in Christ. His doctrine or his mission are its objects; but not, as the New Testament states it, his person as a surety, a sacrifice, a mediator; and much less than anything else can it be called, in the language of Scripture, "faith in his blood," a phrase utterly incapable of an interpretation by Socinians. Nor is it possible to offer up prayer to God in the name of Christ, though expressly enjoined upon his disciples, in any sense which would not justify all the idolatry of the Roman

Church, in availing themselves of the names, the interests, and the merits of saints. In a Socinian, this would even be more inconsistent, because he denies the doctrine of mediation in any sense which would intimate, that a benevolent God may not be immediately approached by his guilty but penitent creatures. love to Christ, which is made so eminent a grace in internal and experimental Christianity, changes also its character. It cannot be supreme, for that would be to break the

first and great command, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," if Christ himself be not that Lord our God. It must be love of the same kind we feel to creatures from whom we have received any benefit, and a passion, therefore, to be guarded and restrained, lest it should become excessive and wean our hearts and thoughts from God. But surely it is not under such views that love to Christ is represented in the Scriptures; and against its excess, as against creaturely attachments, we

have certainly no admonition, no cautions. The love of Christ to us also as a motive to generous service, sufferings, and death, for the sake of others, loses all its force and application. "The love of Christ constraineth us; for we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead." That love of Christ which constrained the apostle was a love which led him to die for men. St. John makes the duty of dying for our brother obligatory upon all Christians, if called to it, and grounds it upon the

same fact. "He laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for our brethren." The meaning, doubtless, is in order to save them; and though men are saved by Christ's dying for them, in a very different sense from that in which they can be saved by our dying in the cause of instructing, and thus instrumentally saving each other; yet the argument is founded upon the necessary connection which there is between the death of Christ and the salvation of men. But, on the Socinian scheme,

Christ did, in no sense, die for men, no, not in their general mode of interpreting such passages, "for the benefit of men:" for what benefit, independent of propitiation, which Socinians deny, do men derive from the voluntary death of Christ, considered as a mere human instructor? If it be said his death was an example, it was not specially and peculiarly so; for both prophets and apostles have died with resignation and fortitude. If it be alleged, that it was to confirm his doctrine, the answer is,

that, in this view, it was nugatory, because it had been confirmed by undoubted miracles. If that he might confirm his mission by his resurrection, this might as well have followed from a natural as from a violent death; and beside the benefit which men derive from him, is, by this notion, placed in his resurrection, and not in his death, which is always exhibited in the New Testament with marked and striking emphasis. The motive to generous sacrifices of ease and life,

in behalf of men, drawn from the death of Christ, have, therefore, no existence whenever his Godhead and sacrifice are denied.

4. The general and habitual exercises of the affections of TRUST, hope, joy, &c, toward Christ, are all interfered with by the Socinian doctrine. This has, in part, been stated; but "if the Redeemer were not omnipresent and omniscient, could we be certain that he always hears our prayers, and knows the source and

remedy of all our miseries? If he were not all merciful, could we be certain he must always be willing to pardon and relieve us? If he were not all-powerful, could we be sure that he must always be able to support and strengthen, to enlighten and direct us? Of any being less than God, we might suspect that his purposes might waver, his promises fail, his existence itself, perhaps, terminate; for of every created being, the existence must be dependent and terminable." (Dr. Graves's

Scriptural Proofs of the Trinity.]

The language too, I say not of the Church of Christ in all ages, for that has been formed upon her faith, but of the Scriptures themselves, must be altered and brought down to these inferior views.

No dying saint can say, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," if he be a man like ourselves; and the redeemed neither in heaven nor in earth, can dare to associate a creature so with God in Divine honors and solemn

worship, as to unite in the chorus, "Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, forever!"

The same essential changes must be made in the doctrine of Divine agency* in the heart of man, and in the Church, and the same confusion introduced into the language of Scripture. "Our salvation by Christ does not consist only in the expiation of our sins, &c, but in communication of Divine grace and power, to

renew and sanctify us: and this is everywhere in Scripture attributed to the Holy Spirit, as his peculiar office in the economy of man's salvation: it must therefore make a fundamental change in the doctrine of Divine grace and assistance, to deny the Divinity of the Holy Spirit. For can a creature be the universal spring and fountain of Divine grace and life? Can a finite creature be a kind of universal soul to the whole Christian Church, and to every sincere member of it? Can a creature make such

close application to our minds, know our thoughts, set bounds to our passions, inspire us with new affections and desires, and be more intimate to us than we are to ourselves? If a creature be the only instrument and principle of grace, we shall soon be tempted either to deny the grace of God, or to make it only an external thing, and entertain very mean conceits of it. All those miraculous gifts which were bestowed upon the apostles and primitive Christians, for the edification of the Church;

all the graces of the Christian life, are the fruits of the Spirit. The Divine Spirit is the principle of immortality in us, which first gave life to our souls, and will, at the last day, raise our dead bodies out of the dust; works which sufficiently proclaim him to be God, and which we cannot heartily believe, in the Gospel notion, if he be not." (Sherlock's Vindication.) All this has been felt so forcibly by the deniers of the Divinity of the Holy Spirit, that they have escaped only by taking another leap down

the gulf of error; and, at present, the Socinians deny that there is any Holy Ghost, and resolve the whole into a figure of speech.

But the importance of the doctrine of the holy trinity may be finally argued from the manner in which the denial of it would affect the credit of the Holy Scriptures themselves; for if this doctrine be not contained in them, their tendency to mislead is obvious. Their constant language is so adapted to deceive, and even to

compel the belief of falsehood, even in fundamental points, and to lead to the practice of idolatry itself, that they would lose all claim to be regarded as a revelation from the God of truth, and ought rather to be shunned than to be studied. A great part of the Scriptures is directed against idolatry, which is declared to be "that abominable thing which the Lord hateth;" and in pursuance of this design, the doctrine that there is but one God is laid down in the most explicit terms, and constantly

confirmed by appeals to his works. The very first command in the Decalogue is, "Thou shalt have no other Gods before me;" and the sum of the law, as to our duty to God, is that we love him "with all our heart, and mind, and soul, and strength." If the doctrine of a trinity of Divine persons in the unity of the Godhead be consistent with all this, then the style and manner of the Scriptures are in perfect accordance with the moral ends they propose, and the truths in which they would instruct

mankind; but if the Son and the Holy Spirit are creatures, then is the language of the sacred books most deceptive and dangerous.

For how is it to be accounted for, in that case, that, in the Old Testament, God should be spoken of in plural terms, and that this plurality should be restricted to three? How is it that the very name Jehovah should be given to each of them, and that repeatedly and on the most solemn occasions? How is it that the promised,

incarnate Messiah should be invested, in the prophecies of his advent, with the loftiest attributes of God, and that works infinitely superhuman, and Divine honors should be predicted of him? and that acts and characters of unequivocal Divinity, according to the common apprehension of mankind, should be ascribed to the Spirit also? How is it, that, in the New Testament, the name of God should be given to both, and that without any intimation that it is to be taken in an inferior sense? That the

creation and conservation of all things should be ascribed to Christ; that he should be worshipped by angels and by men; that he should be represented as seated on the throne of the universe, to receive the adorations of all creatures; and that in the very form of initiation by baptism into his Church, itself a public and solemn profession of faith, the baptism is enjoined to be performed in the one name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost? One God and two creatures! As though the very door of entrance into

the Christian Church should have been purposely made the gate of the worst and most corrupting error ever introduced among mankind, - trust and worship in creatures as God; the error which has spread darkness and moral desolation over the whole pagan world!

And here it cannot be said that the question is begged, that more is taken for granted than the Socinians will allow; for this argument does not rest at all upon what the deniers

of our Lord's Divinity understand by all these terms, and what interpretations may be put upon them. This is the popular view of the subject which has just been drawn from the Scriptures; and they themselves acknowledge it by resorting to the arts and labors of far-fetched criticism, in order to attach to these passages of Scripture a sense different to the obvious and popular one. But it is not merely the popular sense of Scripture. It is so taken, and has been taken in all ages, by the

wisest men and most competent critics, to be the only consistent sense of the sacred volume; a circumstance which still more strongly proves, that if the Scriptures were written on Socinian principles, they are more unfortunately expressed than any book in the world; and they can, on no account, be considered a Divine revelation, not because of their obscurity, for they are not obscure, but because terms are used in them which convey a sense different from what the writers intended, if

indeed they were Socinians. But their evidences prove them to be a revelation of truth from the God of truth, and they cannot therefore be so written as to lead men, who use only ordinary care, into fundamental error; and the conclusion therefore must inevitably be, that if we must admit either on the one hand what is so derogatory to the Scriptures, and so subversive of all confidence in them, or, on the other, that the doctrine of the Divinity of the Son and Holy Spirit is there

explicitly taught, there is no medium between absolute infidelity and the acknowledgment of our Lord's Divinity; and indeed, to adopt the representation of a great divine, it is rather to rave than to reason, to suppose, that he whom the Scriptures teach us to regard as the Savior of our souls, and as our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; he who hears our prayers, and is always present with his Church throughout the world, who sits at the right hand of

God, in the glory of his Father, and who shall come at the last day in glory and majesty, accompanied with ministering angels, to judge all mankind and to bring to light the very secrets of their hearts, should be a mere man or a created being of any kind. (3) I close this view of the importance of the doctrine of the trinity by the observations of Dr. Waterland:-

"While we consider the doctrine of the trinity as interwoven with the very frame and texture of the

Christian religion, it appears to me natural to conceive that the whole scheme and economy of man's redemption was laid with a principal view to it, in order to bring man-kind gradually into an acquaintance with the three Divine persons, one God blessed for ever. I would speak with all due modesty, caution, and reverence, as becomes us always in what concerns the unsearchable councils of Heaven: but I say, there appears to me none so natural, or so probable an account of the Divine

dispensations, from first to last, as what I have just mentioned, namely, that such a redemption was provided, such an expiation for sins required, such a method of sanctification appointed, and then revealed, that so men might know that there are three Divine persons, might be apprized how infinitely the world is indebted to them, and might accordingly be both instructed and inclined to love, honor, and adore them here, because that must be a considerable part of their employment and

happiness hereafter." (Importance of the Doctrine of the Trinity.)

(3) Oikonwma, quae ipsi tribuitur, deologian necessario supponit, ipsumque omnlno statuit. Quid enim? Messiam sive Christum predicant sacrae nostrae literae et credere nos profitemur omnes, qui sit animarum sospitator, qui nobis sit sapientia, justitia, sanctificatio et redemptio-qui preces suorum, ubivis sacrosanc turn ejus nomen invocantium, illico exaudiat-qui ecclesiae suae

per universum terrarum orbem disseminatee, semper praesto sit-qui Deo Patri, suunthronos, et in eadem sede collocatus sit-qui denique, in exitu mundt, immensa gloria et majestate refulgens, angelis ministris stipatus, veniet orbem judicaturus, non modo facta omnia, sed et cordis secreta omnium quotquot fuere hominum in lucem prodituras, &c. Haeccine omnia in purum hominean, aut creaturam aliquam competere? Fidenter dico, qui ita sentiat, non modo contra Fidem, sed et rationcm

ipsam insanire. (Bull. Judic. Ecel. Cath.)

In order to bring this great controversy in such an order before the reader, as may assist him to enter with advantage into it, I shall first carefully collect the leading testimonies of Scripture on the doctrine of the trinity and the Divinity of the Son and Holy Spirit, - adduce the opinions of the Jewish and Christian Churches, - answer objections, - explain the chief modern heresies on this subject, and give their Scriptural confutation. An

observation or two on the difficulties in which the doctrine of a trinity of persons in the unity of one undivided Godhead is said to involve us, may properly close this chapter.

Mere difficulty in conceiving of what is wholly proper and peculiar to God, forms no objection to a doctrine. It is more rationally to be considered as a presumption of its truth, since in the nature of God there must be mysteries far above the reach of the human mind. All his natural attributes,

though of some of them we have images in ourselves, are utterly incomprehensible; and the manner of his existence cannot be less so. All attempts, however, to show that this great doctrine implies a contradiction, have failed. A contradiction is only where two contraries are predicated of the same thing, and in the same respect. Let this be kept in view, and the sophisms resorted to on this point by the adversaries of the faith, will be easily detected. They urge, that the same thing

cannot be three and one, that is, if the proposition has any meaning at all, not in the same respect; the three persons are not one person, and the one God is not three Gods. But it is no Contradiction to say, that in different respects the three may be one; that is, that in respect of persons, they shall be three9 and in respect of Godhead, essence, or nature, they shall be one.

The manner of the thing is a perfectly distinct question, and its incomprehensibility proves

nothing but that we are finite creatures, and not God. As for difficulties, we shall certainly not be relieved by running either to the Arian or the Socinian hypothesis. The one ascribes the first formation and the perpetual government of the universe, not to the Deity, but to the wisdom and power of a creature; for, however exalted the Arian inferior Deity may be, he is a creature still.

The other makes a mere man the creator of all

things. For whatever is meant by "the Word in St. John's Gospel, it is the same Word of which the evangelist says, that all things were made by it, and that itself was made flesh. If this Word be the Divine attribute wisdom, then that attribute in the degree which was equal to the formation of the universe, in this view of the Scripture doctrine, was conveyed entire into the mind of a mere man, the son of a Jewish carpenter! A much greater difficulty, in my apprehension, than any

that is to be found in the catholic faith."

(Harsley's Letters.)

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29 TRINITY - SCRIPTURE TESTIMONY

In adducing the doctrine of a trinity of Divine persons in the unity of the Godhead from the sacred volume, by exhibiting some of its numerous and decisive testimonies as to this being the mode in which the Divine nature subsists; the

explicit manner in which it is there laid down, that there is but one God, must again be noticed.

This is the foundation and the key stone of the whole fabric of Scriptural theology; and every argument in favor of the trinity flows from this principle of the absolute unity of God, a principle which the heresies at which we have glanced fancy to be inconsistent with the orthodox doctrine.

The solemn and unequivocal manner in which the unity of God is

stated as a doctrine, and is placed as the foundation of all true religion, whether devotional or practical, need not again be repeated; and it is here sufficient to refer to the chapter on the unity of God.

Of this one God, the high and peculiar, and, as it has been truly called, the appropriate name, is JEHOVAH; which, like all the Hebrew names of God, is not an insignificant and accidental term, but a name of revelation, a name adopted by God himself for the purpose of making

known the mystery of his nature. To what has been already said on this appellation, I may add that the most eminent critics derive it from hayah, fuit existit; which in Kal signifies to be, and in Hiphel to cause to be. Buxtorf, in his definition, includes both these ideas, and makes it signify a being existing from himself from everlasting to everlasting, and communicating existence to others, and adds, that it signifies the Being who is, and was, and is to come. Its derivation has been

variously stated by critics, and some fanciful notions have been formed of the import of its several letters; but in this idea of absolute existence all agree. "It is acknowledged by all," says Bishop Pearson, "that hayah is from hah or hih, and God's own interpretation proves no less, Exodus 3:14. Some contend that futurition is essential to the name, yet all agree the root signifieth nothing but essence or existence, that is, po einai or uparcein." (Exposition of the Creed.) No appellation of the Divine

Being could therefore be more distinctive, than that which imports independent and eternal being; and for this reason probably it was, that the Jews, up to a very high antiquity, had a singular reverence for it; carried, it is true, to a superstitious scrupulosity; but thereby showing that it was the name which unveiled, to the thoughts of those to whom it was first given, the awful and overwhelming glories of a self-existent Being, - the very unfathomable depths of his eternal Godhead. (4)

(4) Maimonides tells us, that it was not lawful to utter this name, except in the sanctuary, and by the priests. "Nomen, quod, ut nosti, non proferre licet, nisi in sanctuario, et a sacerdotibus Dei sanctis, solum in benedictione sacerdotura, ut et a sacerdote magno in die jejunii."

In examining what the Scriptures teach of this self-existent and eternal Being, our attention is first arrested by the important fact, that than one Jehovah is spoken of under plural

appellations, and that not once or twice, but in a countless number of instances. So that the Hebrew names of God, acknowledged by all to be expressive and declaratory of some peculiarity or excellence of his nature, are found in several cases in the plural as well as in the singular form, and one of them", Aleim, generally so; and notwithstanding it was so fundamental and distinguishing an article of the Jewish faith, in opposition to the polytheism of almost all other nations, there was

but one living and true God. I give a few instances. Jehovah, if it has not a plural form, has more than one personal application. "Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven." We have here the visible Jehovah who had talked with Abraham, raining the storm of vengeance from another Jehovah, out of heaven, and who was therefore invisible. Thus we have two Jehovahs expressly mentioned, "the lord rained from the lord," and

yet we have it most solemnly asserted in Deut. 6:4, "Hear, O Israel, Jehovah our God is one Jehovah."

The very first name in the Scriptures under which the Divine Being is introduced to us as the Creator of heaven and earth, is a plural one, ALEIM; and to connect in the same singular manner as in the foregoing instance, plurality with unity, it is the nominative case to a verb singular. "In the beginning, gods created the heavens and the earth." Of

this form innumerable instances occur in the Old Testament. That the word is plural, is made certain by its being often joined with adjectives, pronouns, and verbs plural; and yet when it can mean nothing else than the true God, it is generally joined in its plural form with verbs singular. To render this still more striking, the Aleim are said to be Jehovah, and Jehovah the Aleim: thus in Psalm 100:3, "Know ye, that Jehovah, he, the Aleim, he hath made us, and not we ourselves." And in the

passage before given, "Jehovah our aleim, (Gods,) is one Jehovah." Al, the mighty one, another name of God, has its plural ALIM, the mighty ones. The former is rendered by Trommius Theos the latter Thoi. abir, the potent one has the plural abirim, the potent ones. Man did eat the bread of the Abirim, "angels' food," conveys no idea; the manna was the bread provided miraculously, and was therefore called the food of the powerful ones, of them who have power over all nature, the one God.

Adonim, is the plural form of Adon, a governor. "If I be Adonim, masters, where is my fear?"

Mal. 1:6. Many other instances might be given, as, "Remember thy Creators in the days of thy youth." "The knowledge of the Holy Ones is understanding." "There be higher than they." Heb.

High Ones; and in Daniel, "the Watchers and the Holy Ones"

Other plural forms of speech also occur when the one true God only is

spoken of. "And God said, Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness." "And the lord God said, Behold the man is become like one of us" "And the lord said, Let us go down." - "Because there God appeared to him." Heb. God they appeared, the verb being plural. These instances need not be multiplied: they are the common forms of speech in the sacred Scriptures, which no criticism has been able to resolve into mere idioms, and which only the doctrine of a plurality of persons in the

unity of the Godhead can satisfactorily explain. If they were mere idioms, they could not have been misunderstood by those to whom the Hebrew tongue was native, to imply plurality; but of this we have sufficient evidence, which shall be adduced when we speak of the faith of the Jewish Church. They have been acknowledged to form a striking singularity in the Hebrew language, even by those who have objected to the conclusion drawn from them; and the question, therefore, has been to find an hypothesis,

which should account for a peculiarity, which is found in no other language, with the same circumstances. (5)

(5) The argument for the trinity drawn from the plural appellations given to God in the Hebrew Scriptures, was opposed by the younger Buxtorf; who yet admits that this argument should not altogether be rejected among Christians, "for upon the same principle on which not a few of the Jews refer this emphatical application of the plural

number to a plurality of powers or of influences, or of operations, that is, ad extra; why may we not refer it, ad intra, to a plurality of persons and to personal works? Yea, who certainly knows what that was which the ancient Jews understood by this plurality of powers and faculties?"

Some have supposed angels to be associated with God when, these plural forms occur. For this there is no foundation in the texts themselves, and it is beside a manifest

absurdity. Others, that the style of royalty was adopted, which is refuted by two considerations-that almighty God in other instances speaks in the singular and not in the plural number; and that this was not the style of the sovereigns of the earth when Moses or any of the sacred penmen composed their writings; no instance of it being found in any of the inspired books. A third opinion is, that the plural form of speaking of God was adopted by the Hebrews from their ancestors, who were

polytheists, and that the ancient theological term was retained after the unity of God was acknowledged. This assumes what is totally without proof, that the ancestors of the Hebrews were polytheists; and could that be made out, it would leave it still to be accounted for, why other names of the Deity equally ancient, for anything that appears to the contrary, are not also plural, and especially the high name of Jehovah; and why, more particularly the very appellation in question, Aleim, should

have a singular form also, Alim in the same language. The grammatical reasons which have been offered are equally unsatisfactory. If then no hypothesis explains this peculiarity, but that which concludes it to indicate that mode of the Divine existence which was expressed in later theology by the phrase, a trinity of persons, the inference is too powerful to be easily resisted, that these plural forms must be considered as intended to intimate the plurality of persons in essential connection with

one supreme and adorable Deity.

This argument, however, taken alone, powerful as it has often been justly deemed, does not contain the strength of the case. For natural as it is to expect, presuming this to be the mode of the Divine existence, that some of his names which, according to the expressive and simple character of the Hebrew language, are descriptions of realities, and that some of the modes of expression adopted even in the earliest revelations, should carry

some intimation of a fact, which, as essentially connected with redemption, the future complete revelation of the redeeming scheme was intended fully to unfold; yet, were these plural titles and forms of construction blotted out, the evidence of a plurality of Divine persons in the Godhead would still remain in its strongest form. For that evidence is not merely, that God has revealed himself under plural appellations, nor that these are constructed with sometimes singular and

sometimes plural forms of speech; but that three persons, and three persons only are spoken of in the Scriptures under Divine titles, each having the peculiar attributes of Divinity ascribed to him; and yet that the first and leading principle of the same book, which speaks thus of the character and works of these persons, should be, that there is but one God. This point being once established, it may be asked which of the hypotheses, the orthodox, the Arian, or the Socinian, agrees best with this plain

and explicit doctrine of Holy Writ. Plain and explicit, I say, not as to the mode of the Divine existence, not as to the comprehension of it, but as to this particular, that the doctrine itself is plainly stated in the Scriptures.

Let this point then be examined, and it will be seen even that the very number three has this pre-eminence; that the application of these names and powers is restrained to it, and never strays beyond it; and that those who confide in the testimony of

God, rather than in the opinions of men, have sufficient Scriptural reason to distinguish their faith from the unbelief of others by avowing themselves Trinitarians. (6)

(6) The word trias, trinitas, came into use in the second century.

The solemn form of benediction, in which the Jewish high priests were commanded to bless the children of Israel, has in it this peculiar indication, and singularly answers to the form of benediction so general in the close of the

apostolic epistles, and which so appropriately closes the solemn services of Christian worship. It is given in Numbers 6:24-27.

Jehovah bless thee and keep thee:

Jehovah make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: Jehovah lift his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.

If the three members of this form of benediction be attentively considered, they will be found to agree respectively to the three

persons taken in the usual order of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The Father is the author of blessing and preservation, illumination and grace are from the Son, illumination and peace from the Spirit, the teacher of truth and the Comforter.

(Vide Jones's Catholic Doctrine.)

"The first member of the formula expresses the benevolent 'love of God;' the father of mercies and fountain of all good: the second well comports with the redeeming and

reconciling 'grace of our Lord Jesus Christ;' and the last is appropriate to the purity, consolation, and joy, which are received from the 'communion of the Holy Spirit.'" (Smith's Person of Christ.) The connection of certain specific blessings in this form of benediction with the Jehovah mentioned three times distinctly, and those which are represented as flowing from the Father, Son, and Spirit in the apostolic form, would be a singular coincidence if it even stood alone; but the light of the

same eminent truth, though not yet fully revealed, breaks forth from other partings of the clouds of the early morning of revelation.

The inner part of the Jewish sanctuary was called the holy of holies, that is, the holy place of the Holy Ones; and the number of these is indicated, and limited to three, in the celebrated vision of Isaiah, and that with great explicitness. The scene of that vision is the holy place of the temple, and lies therefore in the

very abode and residence of the Holy Ones, here celebrated by the seraphs who veiled their faces before them. And one cried unto another, and said, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts." This passage, if it stood alone, might be eluded by saying that this act of Divine adoration here mentioned, is merely emphatic, or in the Hebrew mode of expressing a superlative; though that is assumed, and by no means proved. It is however worthy of serious notice, that this distinct trine act of

adoration, which has been so often supposed to mark a plurality of persons as the objects of it, is answered by a voice from that excellent glory which overwhelmed the mind of the prophet when he was favored with the vision, responding in the same language of plurality in which the doxology of the seraphs is expressed. "Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" But this is not the only evidence that in this passage the Holy Ones, who were addressed each

by his appropriate and equal designation of holy, were the three Divine subsistences in the Godhead. The being addressed is the "Lord of hosts." This all acknowledge to include the Father; but the Evangelist John, xii, 41, in manifest reference to this transaction, observes, "These things said Esaias, when he saw his (Christ's) glory and spake of him." In this vision, therefore, we have the Son also, whose glory on this occasion the prophet is said to have beheld. Acts 28:25,

determines that there was also the presence of the Holy Ghost. "Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, saying, Go unto this people and say, Hearing ye shall hear and not understand, and seeing ye shall see and not perceive," &c. These words, quoted from Isaiah, the Apostle Paul declares to have been spoken by the Holy Ghost, and Isaiah declares them to have been spoken on this very occasion by the "Lord of hosts." "And he said, Go and tell this people, Hear

ye indeed and understand not, and see ye indeed but perceive not," &c.

Now let all these circumstances be placed together-the place, the holy place of the Holy Ones; the repetition of the homage, three times, Holy, holy, holy-the one Jehovah of hosts, to whom it was addressed, - the plural pronoun used by this one Jehovah, us; the declaration of an evangelist, that on this occasion Isaiah saw the glory of christ; the declaration of St. Paul, that

the Lord of hosts who spoke on that occasion was the holy GHOST; and the conclusion will not appear to be without most powerful authority, both circumstantial and declaratory, that the adoration, Holy, holy, holy, referred to the Divine three, in the one essence of the Lord of hosts.

Accordingly, in the book of Revelations, where "the Lamb" is so constantly represented as sitting upon the Divine throne, and where he by name is associated with the Father,

as the object of the equal homage and praise of saints and angels; this scene from Isaiah is transferred into the fourth chapter, and the "living creatures," the seraphim of the prophet, are heard in the same strain, and with the same trine repetition, saying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." Isaiah, 48:16, also makes this threefold distinction and limitation.

"And now the Lord God, and his Spirit, hath sent me." The words are

manifestly spoken by Messiah, who declares himself sent by the Lord God, and by his Spirit. Some render it, hath sent me and his Spirit, the latter term being also in the accusative case. This strengthens the application, by bringing the phrase nearer to that so often used by our Lord in his discourses, who speaks of himself and the Spirit, being sent by the Father. "The Father which sent me-the Comforter whom I will send unto you from the Father, who proceedeth from the Father." Isaiah

34:16, "Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read, for my mouth it hath commanded, and his spirit it hath gathered them." "Here is one person speaking of the Spirit, another person." (Jones on the Trinity.) Hag. 2:5, 7, "I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts, according to the word that I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt, so my Spirit remaineth among you; fear ye not. For thus saith the Lord of hosts, I will shake all nations, and the Desire of all nations shall come." Here also we have three

persons distinctly mentioned; the Lord of hosts, his Spirit, and the Desire of all nations.

Many other passages might be given, in which there is this change of persons, sometimes enumerating two, sometimes three, but never more than three, arrayed in these eminent and Divine characters. The passages in the New Testament are familiar to every one: "Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the

love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost," with others in which the sacred three, and three only, are thus collocated as objects of equal trust and honor, and equally the fountain and the source of grace and benediction.

On the celebrated passage in 1 John 5:7, "There are three that bear record in heaven," I say nothing, because authorities against its genuine-ness are found in the ranks of the orthodox, and among those who do not captiously

make objections; and because it would scarcely be fair to adduce it as a proof, unless the arguments on each side were exhibited, which would lead to discussions which lie beside the design of this work, and more properly have their place in separate and distinct treatises. The recent revival of the inquiry into the genuineness of this text, however, shows that the point is far from being critically settled against the passage, as a true portion of Holy Writ, and the argument from the context

is altogether in favor of those who advocate it, the hiatus in the sense never having been satisfactorily supplied by those who reject it. This is of more weight in arguments of this kind than is often allowed. As to the doctrine of the text, it has elsewhere abundant proof.

It has now been shown, that while the unity of God is to be considered a fundamental doctrine of the Scriptures, laid down with the utmost solemnity, and guarded with the utmost care, by precepts,

by threatenings, by promises, by tremendous punishments of polytheism and idolatry among the Jews, the very names of God, as given in the revelation made of himself, have plural forms and are connected with plural modes of speech; that other indications of plurality are given in various parts of Holy Writ; and that this plurality is restricted to three. On those texts, however, which in their terms denote a plurality and a trinity, the proof does not wholly or chiefly rest, and they have been

only adduced as introductory to instances too numerous to be all examined, in which two distinct persons are spoken of, sometimes connectedly and sometimes separately, as associated with God in his perfections and incommunicable glories, and as performing works of unequivocal Divine majesty and infinite power, and thus together manifesting that tri-unity of the Godhead which the true Church has in all ages adored and magnified. This is the great proof upon which the doctrine rests.

The first of these two persons is the Son, the second the Spirit. Of the former, it will be observed that the titles of Jehovah, Lord, God, King, King of Israel, Redeemer, Savior, and other names of God, are ascribed to him, -

that he is invested with the attributes of eternity, omnipotence, ubiquity, infinite wisdom, holiness, goodness, &c, - that he was the Leader, the visible King, and the object of the worship of the Jews, - that he forms the great subject of prophecy, and is spoken

of in the predictions of the prophets in language, which if applied to men or to angels would by the Jews have been considered not as sacred but idolatrous, and which, therefore, except that it agreed with their ancient faith, would totally have destroyed the credit of those writings, - that he is eminently known both in the Old Testament and in the New, as the Son of God, as appellative which is sufficiently proved to have been considered as implying an assumption of Divinity by the

circumstance that, for asserting it, our Lord was condemned to die as a blasphemer by the Jewish Sanhedrim, - that he became incarnate in our nature, - wrought miracles by his own original power, and not, as his servants, in the name of an-other, - that he authoritatively forgave sin, -

that for the sake of his sacrifice, sin is forgiven to the end of the world, and for the sake of that alone, - that he rose from the dead to seal all these pretensions to Divinity, - that he is

seated upon the throne of the universe, all power being given to him in heaven and in earth, - that his inspired apostles exhibit him as the Creator of all things visible and invisible; as the true God and the eternal life; as the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God and our Savior, -

that they offer to him the highest worship, - that they trust in him, and command all others to trust in him for eternal life, - that he is the head over all things, - that angels worship him

and render him service, - that he will raise the dead at the last day, - judge the secrets of men's hearts, and finally determine the everlasting state of the righteous and the wicked.

This is the outline of Scriptural testimony as to the Son. As to the Divine character of the Spirit, it is equally explicit. He too is called Jehovah; Jehovah of hosts; God. Eternity, omnipotence, ubiquity, infinite wisdom, and other attributes of Deity, are ascribed to him. He is introduced as an agent in

the work of the creation, and to him is ascribed the conservation of all living beings.

He is the source of the inspiration of prophets and apostles; the object of worship; the efficient agent in illuminating, comforting, and sanctifying the souls of men. He makes intercession for the saints; quickens the dead, and, finally, he is associated with the Father and the Son, in the form of baptism into the one name of God, and in the apostolic form of benediction, as equally

with them the source and fountain of grace and blessedness. These decisive points I shall proceed to establish by the express declarations of various passages, both of the Old and New Testament. When that is done, the argument will then be that as on the one hand the doctrine of Scripture is, that there is but one GOD; and, on the other, that throughout both Testaments, three persons are, in unequivocal language, and by unequivocal circumstances, declared to be Divine; the only conclusion which can

harmonize these otherwise opposite, contradictory, and most misleading propositions, and declarations, is, that the three persons are one God.

In the prevalent faith of the Christian Church, neither of these views is for a moment lost sight of. Thus it exactly harmonizes with the Scriptures, nor can it be charged with greater mystery than is assignable to them. The trinity is asserted, but the unity is not obscured; the unity is confessed, but without denial of the trinity. No

figures of speech, no unnatural modes of interpretation are resorted to, to reconcile these views with human conceptions, which they must infinitely transcend. This is the character of the heresies which have arisen on this subject. They all spring from the attempt to make this mystery of God conceivable by the human mind, and less a stone of stumbling to the pride of reason. On the contrary, "the faith of God's elect," as embodied in the creeds and confessions of all truly evangelical Churches,

follow the example of the Scriptures in entirely overlooking these low considerations, and "declaring the thing as it is,"

with all its mystery and incomprehensibleness, to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness. It declares "that we worship one God in trinity, and trinity in unity; neither confounding the persons nor dividing the substance; for there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost;

but the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost is all one; the glory equal, the majesty coeternal. So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God; and yet there are not three Gods, but one God." (Athanasian Creed.) Or, as it is well expressed by an eminent modern, as great a master of reason and science as he was of theology: "There is one Divine nature or essence, common unto three persons, incomprehensibly united, and ineffably distinguished; united in

essential attributes, distinguished by peculiar idioms and relations; all equally infinite in every Divine perfection, each different from the other in order and manner of subsistence; that there is a mutual existence of one in all, and all in one; a communication without any deprivation or diminution in the communicant; an eternal generation, and an eternal procession without precedence or succession, without proper causality or dependent; a Father imparting his own, and a

Son receiving his Father's life, and a Spirit issuing from both, without any division or multiplication of essence. These are notions which may well puzzle our reason in conceiving how they agree; but ought not to stagger our faith in asserting that they are true; for if the Holy Scripture teacheth us plainly, and frequently doth inculcate upon us, that there is but one true God; if it as manifestly doth ascribe to the three persons of the blessed trinity, the same august names, the same peculiar

characters, the same Divine attributes, the same superlatively admirable operations of creation and providence; if it also doth prescribe to them the same supreme honors, services, praises, and acknowledgments to be paid to them all; this may be abundantly enough to satisfy our minds, to stop our mouths, to smother all doubt and dispute about this high and holy mystery." (Dr. Barrow's Defence of the Trinity.)

One observation more, before we proceed to the

Scriptural evidence of the positions above laid down, shall close this chapter. The proof; of the doctrine of the trinity, I have said, grounds itself on the firm foundation of the Divine unity, and it closes with it; and this may set the true believer at rest, when he is assailed by the sophistical enemies of his faith with the charge of dividing his regards, as he directs his prayers to one or other of the three persons of the Godhead. For the time at least, he is said to honor one to the exclusion of the others. The true Scriptural

doctrine of the unity of God, will remove this objection. It is not the Socinian notion of unity. Theirs is the unity of one, ours the unity of three. We do not, however, as they seem to suppose, think the Divine essence divisible, and participated by, and shared among, three persons; but wholly and undividedly possessed and enjoyed. Whether, therefore, we address our prayers and adorations to the Father, Son, or Holy Ghost, we address the same adorable Being, the one living and true God.

"Jehovah, our Aleim, is one Jehovah." With reference to the relations which each person bears to us in the redeeming economy, our approaches to the Father are to be made through the mediation of the Son, and by, or with dependence upon, the assistance of the Holy Spirit. Yet, as the authority of the New Testament shows, this does not preclude direct prayer to Christ and to the Holy Spirit, and direct ascriptions of glory and honor to each. In all this we glorify the one

"God over all, blessed for evermore."

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30 TRINITY - PRE-EXISTENCE OF CHRIST

By establishing, on Scriptural authority, the pre-existence of our Lord, we take the first step in the demonstration of his absolute Divinity. His pre-existence, indeed, simply considered, does not evince his Godhead, and is not, therefore, a proof against the Arian hypothesis; but it

destroys the Socinian notion, that he was a man only. For since no one contends for the pre-existence of human souls, and if they did, the doctrine would be refuted by their own consciousness, it is clear, that if Christ existed before his incarnation, he is not a mere man, whatever his nature, by other arguments, may be proved to be.

This point has been felt to press so heavily upon the doctrine of the simple humanity of Christ, that both ancient and modern

Socinians have bent against it all those arts of interpretation which, more than anything else, show both the hopelessness of their cause, and the pertinacity with which they cling to oft and easily refuted error. I shall dwell a little on this point, because it will introduce some instances in illustration of the peculiar character of the Socinian mode of perverting the Scriptures.

The existence of our Lord prior to his incarnation might be forcibly argued

from the declarations that he was "sent into the world;" that "he came in the flesh;" that "he took part of flesh and blood;" that he was "found in fashion as a man;" and other similar phrases. These are modes of speech which are used of no other person; which are never adopted to express the natural birth, and the commencement of the existence of ordinary men; and which Socinianism, therefore, leaves without a reason, and without an explanation, when used of Christ, But arguments

drawn from these phrases are rendered wholly unnecessary, by the frequent occurrence of passages which explicitly declare his pre-existence, and by which the ingenuity of unsubmissive criticism has been always foiled; the interpretations given being too forced, and too unsupported, either by the common rules of criticism, or by the idioms of language, to produce the least impression upon any, not previously disposed to torture the word of God in order to make it subservient to an error.

The first of these proofs of the pre-existence of Christ is from the testimony of the Baptist, John 1:15, "He that cometh after me is preferred before me, for he was 'before me,' or as it is in verse 30, "After me cometh a man which is preferred before me, for he was before me."

The Socinian exposition is, "The Christ, who is to begin his ministry after me has, by the Divine appointment, been preferred before me, because he is my chief or principal." Thus they interpret the last clause

"for he was before me," in the sense of dignity, and not of time, though St. John uses the same word to denote priority of time, in several places of his Gospel, "If the world hate you, you know that it hated me, before it hated you;" and ch. 1:41; 8:7; 20:4-8. If they take the phrase in the second clause TmprosthTn mou gTgonen in the sense of "preferred," then, by their mode of rendering the last clause, as Bishop Pearson has observed, "a thing is made the reason of itself, which is a great absurdity and a vain

tautology." - "He is preferred before me, because he is my chief;" whereas by taking horotos mu in the sense of time, a reason for this preference is given. There is, however, another rendering of the second clause which makes the passage still more impracticable in the sense of the Socinians. Emprosthen is never in the Septuagint or in the New Testament used for dignity or rank; but refers either to place or time, and if taken in the sense of time, the rendering will be, "He that cometh after me was before

me;" and on, in the next clause, signifying "certainly" "truly," (Schleusner sub voce,) the last clause will be made emphatical, "certainly, he was before, me," and is to be considered, not as giving a reason for the sentiment in the preceding clause, or as tautological, but as explanatory and impressive; a mode of speaking exceedingly natural when so great a doctrine, and so high a mystery was to be declared, that he who was born after John, was yet, in point of existence, before him;-

"certainly, he was before me." This rendering of the second clause is adopted by several eminent critics; but whether this or the common version be preferred, the verb in the last clause, he was before me, sufficiently fixes orotos in the sense of priority of time. Had it referred to the rank and dignity of Christ, it would not have been, "he was," but "he is before me," esi not hn.

The passages which express that Christ came down from heaven, are next to be considered. He

styles himself "the bread of God which cometh down from heaven. - The living bread which came down from heaven. - He that cometh from above is above all; he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth; he that cometh from heaven is above all;" and in his discourse with Nicodemus, "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven." In what manner are declarations so plain and unequivocal to be eluded, and by what arts

are they to be interpreted, into nothing? This shall be considered. Socinus and his early disciples, in order to account for these phrases, supposed that Christ, between the time of his birth and entrance upon his office, was translated into heaven, and there remained some time, that he might see and hear those things which he was to publish in the world. This hypothesis, however, only proves the difficulty, or rather the impossibility of interpreting these passages, so as to turn

away their hostile aspect from the errors of man.

It is supported by no passage of Scripture, by no tradition, by no reason in the nature of the thing, or in the discourse. The modern Socinians, therefore, finding the position of their elder brethren untenable, resolve the whole into figure, the most convenient method of evading the difficulty, and tell us, that as we should naturally say, that a person who would become acquainted with the secret purposes of God, must

ascend to heaven to converse with him, and return to make them known, so our Lord's words do not necessarily imply a literal ascent and descent, but merely this, "that he alone was admitted to an intimate knowledge of the Divine will, and was commissioned to reveal it to men." (Belsham's Calm Inquiry.)

In the passages quoted above, as declarations of the pre-existence of Christ, it will be seen that there are two phrases to be accounted for, - ascending

into heaven, - and, coming down from heaven. The former is said to mean the being admitted to an intimate knowledge of the Divine counsels. But if this were the sense, it could not be true that "no man" had thus ascended but "the Son of man;" since Moses and all the prophets in succession had been admitted to "an intimate knowledge of the Divine counsels," and had been "commissioned" to reveal them, It is nothing to say that our Lord's acquaintance with the

Divine counsels was more deep and comprehensive.

The case is not stated comparatively, but exclusively, - "No man hath ascended into heaven but the Son of man;" no man, but himself, had been in heaven. (7) Allowing therefore the principle of the Socinian gloss, it is totally inapplicable to the text in question, and is in fact directly refuted by it.

(7) "No man, except myself, ever was in heaven." (Pearce.) But the principle is false, and it may be denied, that "to ascend into

heaven" is a Hebrew phrase to express the knowledge of high and mysterious things. So utterly does this pretence fail, that not one of the passages they adduce in proof can be taken in any other than its literal meaning; and they are therefore, as are others, directly against them. Deut. 30:11, is first adduced. "Who shall go up for us into heaven, and bring it unto us?" This we are told we must take figuratively; but then, unhappily for them, it is also immediately

subjoined, "neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, who shall go over the sea for us?" If the ascent into heaven in the first clause is to be taken figuratively, then the going beyond the sea cannot be taken literally, and we shall still want a figurative interpretation for this part of the declaration of Moses respecting the law, which will not so easily be furnished. The same observation is applicable to Romans 10:6, in which there is an adaptation of the passage in Deuteronomy to the

Gospel. "Who shall ascend into heaven? that is, to bring Christ, down from above," &c, words which have no meaning unless place be literally understood, and which show that the apostle, a sufficient judge of Hebrew modes of expression, understood, in its literal sense, the passage in Deuteronomy. A second passage to which they trust, is Prov. 30:4, "Who hath ascended and descended," but if what immediately follows be added, "who hath gathered the winds in his fists, who

hath bound the waters in a garment," &c, it will be seen that the passage has no reference to the acquisition of knowledge by a servant of God, but expresses the various operations in nature carried on by God himself. "Who hath done this? What is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?"

In Baruch 3:29, it is asked of wisdom, "Who hath gone up into heaven, and taken her, and brought her down from the clouds?" but it is here also added, "Or who

hath gone over the sea for her?" Wisdom is, in this passage, clearly personified; a place of habitation is assigned her, which is to be sought out by those who would attain her. This apocryphal text, therefore, gives no countenance to the mystical notion of ascending into heaven, advanced by Socinian expositors.

If they then utterly fail to establish their forced and unnatural sense of ascending into heaven; let us examine whether they

are more successful in establishing their opinion as to the meaning of

"coming down from heaven."This, they say, means "to be commissioned to reveal the will of God to men;" (Behham's Calm Inquiry;) but if so, the phrases, "to ascend up into heaven," and

"to come down from thence," which are manifestly opposed to each other, lose all their opposition in the interpretation, which is sufficient to show, that it is,

as to both, entirely gratuitous, arbitrary and contradictory. For, as Dr. Magee has acutely remarked, "it is observed by the editors of the Unitarian Version, and enforced with much emphasis by Mr. Belsham and Dr. Carpenter, that to ½ascend into heaven' signifies 'to become acquainted with the truths of God,' and that consequently the ' correlative' to this, (the opposite they should have said,) to

'descend from heaven,' must mean ' to bring and to discover those truths to the world.' (Imp. Vers. p. 208; Calm Inq. p. 48.) Now allowing those gentlemen all they wish to establish as to the first clause, - that to go up into heaven means to learn and become acquainted with the counsels of God, - what must follow then if they reasoned justly upon their own principles? Plainly this, that to come down from heaven, being precisely the opposite of the former, must mean to unlearn, or to lose the

knowledge of those counsels: so that, so far from bringing and discovering those counsels to mankind, our Lord must have disqualified himself from bringing any. Had indeed 'ascending into heaven' meant ' bringing the truth (anywhere) from men,' then '

descending from heaven' might justly be said to mean ' bringing it back to men.' Whatever, in short, ascending may be supposed to signify in any figure, descending must signify the opposite, if the

figure be abided by: and therefore, if to ascend be to learn, to descend must be to unlearn."

(Discourses on the Atonement.)

It is farther fatal to this opinion that "if to come from heaven; to descend from heaven," &c, signify receiving a Divine commission to teach; or, more simply to communicate truth after it has been learned, it is never used with reference to Moses, or to any of the prophets, or Divinely appointed instruments

who, from time to time, were raised up among the Jews. We may therefore conclude, that the meaning attached to these phrases by Socinian writers of the present day, who, in this respect, as in many others, have ventured to step beyond their predecessors who never denied their literal acceptation, was unknown among the Jews, and is a mere subterfuge to escape from the plain testimony of Holy Writ on a point so fatal to their scheme.

The next passage which may be quoted as expressing, in unequivocal terms, the pre-existence of Christ, occurs John 6:62, and is, if possible, still more out of the reach of that kind of criticism which has just been exhibited. The occasion, too, fixes the sense beyond all perversion. Our Lord had told the Jews that he was the bread of life, which came down from heaven. This the Jews understood literally, and therefore asked, "Is not this the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know, how

is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?" His disciples too so understood his words, for they also "murmured." But our Lord, so far from removing that impression, so far from giving them the most distant hint of a mode of meeting the difficulty like that resorted to by Socinian writers, strengthens the assertion, and makes his profession a stumbling block still more formidable, "Doth this offend you?" referring to what he had just said, that he had descended from heaven, "What and if ye

shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before." Language cannot be more explicit; though Mr. Belsham has ventured to tell us that this means, "What if I go farther out of your reach, and become more perplexing and mysterious!" And indeed perplexing and mysterious enough would be the words both of Christ and his apostles, if they required such criticisms for their elucidation.

The phrase to be "sent from God," they think they sufficiently avert, by urging

that it is said of the Baptist, "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John." This, they urge, clearly evinces, "that to come from God is to be commissioned by him. If Jesus was sent from God, so was John the Baptist; if the former came down from heaven, so did the latter." This reasoning must be allowed to be fallacious, if it can be shown that it contradicts other scriptures. Now our Lord says, John 6:46, "No one hath seen the Father, save he who is from God, he outos, hath seen the

Father;" namely, this one person, for it is singular, and no one else hath seen the Father.

Therefore, if Christ was that person, as will not be disputed, John could not be "sent from God,"

in the same manner that Christ was. What does the Baptist say of himself? Does he confirm the Socinian gloss? Speaking of Christ and of himself he says, "He that cometh from above is above all; he that is of the earth is earthly, he that cometh from heaven is above all," John 3:31. Here

John contrasts his earthly origin with Christ's heavenly origin. Christ is "from above;" John from "the earth," ex tes ges. Christ is "above all," which he could not be, if every other prophet came in like manner from heaven, and from above; and therefore if John was "sent from God," it cannot be in the same sense that Christ was sent from him, which is enough to silence the objection. (Holden's Scripture Testimonies.) Thus, says Dr. Nares, "we have nothing but the

positive contradictions of the Unitarian party, to prove to us that Christ did not come from heaven, though he says of himself, he did come from heaven; that though he declares he had seen the Father, he had not seen the Father; that though he assures us that he, in a most peculiar and singular manner came forth from God, (ek thes exegthen, a strong and singular expression,) he came from him no otherwise than like the prophets of old, and his own immediate fore-runner."

(Remarks on the Imp. Version.)

Several other equally striking passages might claim our attention; but it will be sufficient for the argument, to close it with two.

"Before Abraham was, I am," John 8:58. Whether the verb eimi "I am," may be understood to be equivalent to the incommunicable name Jehovah, shall be considered in another place. The obvious sense of the passage at least is, "Before Abraham was, or

was born, I was in existence."

Abraham, the patriarch, was the person spoken of; for the Jews having said, "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" our Lord declares, with his peculiarly solemn mode of introduction, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was, I am." I had priority of existence, "together with a continuation of it to the present time." (Pearson on the Creed.) Nor did the Jews mistake his meaning,

but being filled with indignation at so manifest a claim of Divinity, "they took up stones to stone him."

How then do the Socinians dispose of this passage? The two hypotheses on which they have rested, for one would not suffice, are, first, "That Christ existed before the patriarch Abraham had become, according to the import of his name, the father of many nations, that is, before the Gentiles were called;" which was as true of the Jews who were

discoursing with him, as of himself. The second is, "before Abraham was born I am he, i. e. the Christ, in the destination and appointment of God;" which also was saying nothing peculiar of Christ; since the existence and the part which every one of his hearers was to act, were as much in the destination and appointment of God as his own Both these absurdities are well exposed by Bishop Pearson:-

"The first interpretation makes our Savior thus to

speak:- Do ye so much wonder how I should have seen Abraham, who am not yet fifty years old? Do ye imagine so great a contradiction in this? I tell you, and be ye most assured that what I speak unto you at this time is most certainly and infallibly true, and most worthy of your observation, which moves me not to deliver it without this solemn asseveration, (Verily, verily, I say unto you,) before Abraham shall perfectly become that which was signified in his name, the father of many

nations, before the Gentiles shall come in, I am. Nor be ye troubled at this answer, or think in this I magnify myself; for what I speak is as true of you yourselves as it is of me: before Abram be thus made Abraham, ye are.

Doubt ye not, therefore, as ye did, nor ever make that question again whether I have seen Abraham"

"The second explication makes a sense of another nature, but with the same impertinency:- Do ye continue still to question, and with so much

admiration do ye look upon my age and ask, Hast thou seen Abraham? I confess it is more than eighteen hundred years since that patriarch died, and less than forty since I was born at Bethlehem: but look not on this computation, for before Abraham was born I was. But mistake me not, I mean that I was in the foreknowledge and decree of God. Nor do I magnify myself in this, for ye also were so. How either of these answers should give any reasonable satisfaction to the question, or the least occasion of the Jews9

exasperation, is not to be understood. And that our Savior should speak of any such impertinencies as these interpretations bring forth, is not by a Christian to be conceived. Wherefore, as the plain and most obvious sense is a proper and full answer to the question, and most likely to exasperate the unbelieving JEWS; as those strained explications render the words of Christ not only impertinent to the occasion, but vain and useless to the hearers of them; as our Savior gave this answer in words of

another language, most probably incapable of any such interpretations; we must adhere unto that literal sense already delivered, by which it appeareth Christ had a being, as before John, so also before Abraham, and consequently by that he did exist two thousand years before he was born, or conceived by the virgin." (Exposition of the Creed.) The observations of Whitaker on this decisive passage are in his usual energetic manner:-

"'Your Father Abraham,' says our Savior to the Jews, ' rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it, and was glad.' Our Savior thus proposes himself to his countrymen, as their Messiah; that grand object of hope and desire to their fathers, and particularly to this first father of the faithful, Abraham. But his countrymen, not acknowledging his claim to the character of Messiah, and therefore not allowing his supernatural priority of existence to Abraham, chose to consider his words in a signification merely

human. 'Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?' But what does our Savior reply to this low and gross comment upon his intimation Does he retract it, by warping his language to their poor perverseness, and so waiving his pretensions to the assumed dignity? No! to have so acted, would have been derogatory to his dignity, and injurious to their interests. He actually repeats his claim to the character. He actually enforces his pretensions to

a supernatural priority of existence. He even heightens both. He mounts up far beyond Abraham. He ascends beyond all the orders of creation. And he places himself with God at the head of the universe. He thus arrogates to himself all that high pitch of dignity, which the Jews expected their Messiah to assume. This he does too in the most energetic manner, that his simplicity of language, so natural to inherent greatness, would possibly admit. He also introduces what he says, with much solemnity in the

form, and with more in the repetition. 'Verily, verily, I say unto you,' he cries, ' before abraham was, I am.' He says not of himself, as he says of Abraham, 'Before he was, I was.' This indeed would have been sufficient, to affirm his existence previous to Abraham. But it would not have been sufficient, to declare what he now meant to assert, his fall claim to the majesty of the Messiah. He therefore drops all forms of language, that could be accommodated to the mere creatures of God. He arrests one, that was

appropriate to the Godhead itself. 'Before Abraham was? or still more properly, ' Before Abraham was made,' he says, 'I am.' He thus gives himself the signature of uncreated and continual existence, in direct opposition to contingent and created.

He says of himself.

That an eternal now for ever lasts, with him. He attaches to himself that very stamp of eternity, which God appropriates to his Godhead in the Old Testament; and from which an apostle afterward

describes 'Jesus Christ' expressly, to be 'the same yesterday, and today, and forever.'

Nor did the Jews pretend to misunderstand him now. They could not. They heard him directly and decisively vindicating the noblest rights of their Messiah, and the highest honors of their God, to himself. They considered him as a mere pretender to those. They therefore looked upon him, as a blasphemous arrogator of these. 'Then took they up stones, to cast at him' as a blasphemer; as what

indeed he was in his pretensions to be God, if he had not been in reality their Messiah and their God in one. But he instantly proved himself to their very senses, to be both; by exerting the energetic powers of his Godhead, upon them. For he 'hid himself; and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them; and so passed by.'"

The last passage which I shall quote, may properly, both from its dignity and explicitness, close the whole. John 17:5, "And

now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." Whatever this glory was, it was possessed by Christ before the world was; or, as he afterward expresses it, "before the foundation of the world." That question is therefore not to be confounded with the main point which determines the pre-existence of our Lord: for if he was with the Father, and had a glory with him before the world was, and of which "he emptied himself" when he became man, then

he had an existence, not only before his incarnation, but before the very "foundation of the world." The Socinian gloss is, "the glory which I had with thee, in thy immutable decree, before the world was; or which thou didst decree, before the world was, to give me." But heT efchon pr= to· "which I had with thee," cannot bear any such sense. The occasion was too peculiar to admit of any mystical, forced, or parabolic modes of speech. It was in the hearing of his disciples, just before he went out into the garden,

that these words were spoken; and, as it has been well observed, it is remarkable, that he introduces the mention of this glory, when it was not necessary to complete the sense of any proposition. And yet, as if on purpose to prevent the apostles, who heard his prayer, from supposing that he was asking that which he had not possessed in any former period, he adds, "with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." So decisive is this passage, that as Dr. Harwood says, "Were there

no intimation in the whole New Testament of the pre-existence of Christ, this single passage would irrefragably demonstrate and establish it. Our Savior, here in a solemn act of devotion, declares to the Almighty, that he had glory with him before the world was, and fervently supplicates that he would be graciously pleased to reinstate him in his former felicity. The language is plain and clear. Every word has great moment and emphasis:- ' Glorify thou me with that glory which I enjoyed in thy presence,

before the world was.' Upon this single text I lay my finger. Here I posit my system. And if plain words be designedly employed to convey any determinate meaning; if the modes of human speech have any precision, I am convinced, that this plain declaration of our Lord, in an act of devotion, exhibits a great and important truth, which can never be subverted or invalidated by any accurate and satisfactory criticism." (Socinian Scheme.)

Whatever, therefore, the true nature of our Lord

Jesus Christ may be, we have at least discovered from the plainest possible testimonies; testimonies which no criticism, and no unlicensed and paraphrastic comments have been able to shake or to obscure, that he had an existence previous to his incarnation, and previous to the very "foundation of the world. If then we find that the same titles and works which are ascribed to him in the New Testament, are ascribed to a Divine person in the Old, who is yet represented as distinct from God the

Father, and especially to one who was to come into the world to fulfill the very offices which our Lord has actually fulfilled, we shall have obtained another step in this inquiry, and shall have exhibited lofty proof, not only of the pre-existence of Christ, but also of his Divinity. This will be the subject of the next chapter.

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31 TRINITY - JESUS CHRIST THE JEHOVAH OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

In reading the Scriptures of the Old Testament, it is impossible not to mark with serious attention the frequent visible appearances of God to the patriarchs and prophets; and, what is still more singular, his visible residence in a cloud of glory, both among the Jews in the wilderness and in their sacred tabernacle and temple.

The fact of such appearances cannot be disputed; they are allowed by all, and in order to point out the bearing of this fact upon the point at issue, the Divinity of Christ, it is necessary, 1. To show that the person who made these appearances, was truly a Divine person.

The proofs of this are, that he bears the names of Jehovah, God, and other Divine appellations; and that he dwelt among the Israelites as the object of their supreme worship; the worship of a people, the

first precept of whose law was, "Thou shalt have no other Gods before me." The proofs are copious, but quotations shall not be needlessly multiplied.

When the Angel of the Lord found Hagar in the wilderness, "she called the name of Jehovah that spake to her, Thou God seest me." - Jehovah appeared unto Abraham in the plains of Mamre.

Abraham lifted up his eyes, and three men, three persons in human form, "stood by him." One of the three is called Jehovah.

And Jehovah said, "Shall I hide from Abraham the thing that I do?"

Two of the three depart, but he to whom this high appellation is given remains, "but Abraham stood yet before Jehovah." This Jehovah is called by Abraham in the conversation which followed, "the Judge of all the earth;" and the account of the solemn interview is thus closed by the historian, "the Lord (Jehovah) went his way as soon as he had left off communing with

Abraham." Appearances of the same personage occur to Isaac and to Jacob, under the name of

"the God of Abraham, and of Isaac." After one of these manifestations, Jacob says, "I have seen God face to face;" and at another, "Surely the Lord (Jehovah) is in this place." The same Jehovah was made visible to Moses, and gave him his commission, and God said, "I am that I AM; thou shalt say to the children of Israel, I am hath sent me unto you." The same Jehovah went before the

Israelites by day in a pillar of cloud, and by night in a pillar of fire; and by him the law was given amidst terrible displays of power and majesty from Mount Sinai. "I am the Lord (Jehovah) thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, thou shalt have no other Gods before me, &c. Did ever people hear the voice of God, speaking out of the midst of the fire as thou hast heard and live?" This same personage commanded the Israelites to build him a sanctuary,

that he might reside among them; and when it was erected he took possession of it in a visible form, which was called "the glory of the Lord." There the shechinah, the visible token of the presence of Jehovah, rested above the ark; there he was consulted on all occasions, and there he received their worship from age to age. Sacrifices were offered; sin was confessed and pardoned by him; and the book of Psalms is a collection of the hymns which were sung to his honor in the tabernacle and temple services, where

he is constantly celebrated as Jehovah the God of Israel; the "Jehovah, God of their fathers;" and the object of their own exclusive hope and trust: all the works of creation are in those sublime compositions ascribed to him; and he is honoured and adored' as the governor of all nations, and the sole ruler among the children of men. In a word, to mark his Divinity in the strongest possible manner, all blessings, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, "light and defense, grace and

glory," are sought at his hands.

Thus the same glorious being, bearing the appellation of Jehovah, is seen as the object of the worship and trust of ages, and that under a visible manifestation; displaying attributes, engaged in operations, and assuming dignities and honors, which unequivocally array him with the majesty of absolute Divinity.

To this the objections which have been made, admit of a most satisfactory answer.

The first is that this personage is also called "the Angel of the Lord." This is true; but if that Angel of the Lord is the same person as he who is called Jehovah; the same as he who gave the law in his own' name, then it is clear that the term "Angel" does not indicate a created being, and is a designation not of nature, but of office, which will be just now accounted for, and is not at all inconsistent with his true and proper Divinity.

The collation of a few passages, or of the different

parts of the same passages of Scripture, will show that Jehovah and "the Angel of the Lord," when used in this eminent sense, are the same person. Jacob says of Bethel, where he had exclaimed, "Surely Jehovah is in this place:" The Angel of God appeared to me in a dream, saying, I am the God of Bethel. Upon his deathbed he gives the names of God and Angel to this same person. "The God which fed me all my life long unto this day, the Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads.' So in Hosea 12:2, 5, it is

said, "By his strength he had power with God, yea he had power over the Angel and prevailed." "We found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us, even the Lord God of hosts, the Lord is his memorial." Here the same person has the names God, Angel, and Lord God of hosts.

"The Angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven, and said, by myself have I sworn saith the Lord, (Jehovah,) that since thou hast done this thing, in blessing I will bless thee."

The Angel of the Lord appeared to Moses in a flame of fire; but this same Angel of the Lord "called to him out of the bush, and said, I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, and Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God." To omit many other passages, St. Stephen, in alluding to this part of the history of Moses, in his speech before the council, says, "There appeared to Moses in the wilderness of Mount Sinai, An angel of the Lord in a flame of fire,"

showing that that phraseology was in use among the Jews in his day, and that this Angel and Jehovah were regarded as the same being, for he adds, "Moses was in the Church in the wilderness with the Angel which spoke unto him in Mount Sinai." There is one part of the history of the Jews in the wilderness, which so fully shows that they distinguished this Angel of Jehovah from all created angels, as to deserve particular attention. In Exodus 23:20, God makes

this promise to Moses and the Israelites,

"Behold I send an Angel before thee to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared; beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions, for my name is in him." Of this Angel let it be observed, that he is here represented as the guide and protector of the Israelites; to him they were to owe their conquests and their settlement in the promised

land, which are in other places often attributed to the immediate agency of God-that they are cautioned to "beware of him," to reverence and stand in dread of him-that the pardoning of transgressions belongs to him-finally, "that the name of God was in him." This name must be understood of God's own peculiar name, Jehovah, I am, which he assumed as his distinctive appellation at his first appearing to Moses; and as the names of God are indicative 6f his nature, he who had a right

to bear the peculiar name of God, must also have his essence. This view is put beyond all doubt by the fact, that Moses and the Jews so understood the promise; for afterward when their sins had provoked God to threaten not to go up with them himself, but to commit them to "an Angel who should drive out the Canaanite, &c,"

the people mourned over this as a great calamity, and Moses betook himself to special intercession, and rested not until he

obtained the repeal of the threat, and the renewed promise,

"my presence shall go with thee and I will give thee rest." Nothing, therefore, can be more clear than that Moses and the Israelites considered the promise of the Angel, in whom was "the name of God," as a promise that God himself would go with them. With this uncreated Angel, this presence of the Lord, they were satisfied, but not with "an angel" indefinitely, with an angel, not so by office only, as was the

appearing Angel of the Old Testament, but who was by nature of that order of beings usually so called, and therefore a created being. At the news of God's determination not to go up with them, Moses hastens to the tabernacle to make his intercessions, and refuses an inferior conductor. "If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence." (8) (8) From this remarkable passage it appears to me very clear, that the Messenger or Angel of God, whom he here promises to be the leader of his people,

is not a creature, much less Moses or Joshua, but an uncreated Angel. For (1) the clause, He will not pardon your sins, is not applicable to any created being, whether Angel or man: (2) The next words, My name is in him, cannot be explained to signify, he shall act in my name, that is, under my command or by authority received from me, for in that case another word, he will act or he will speak, or the like would have been added: (3) The same conclusion is established by a comparison of this passage

with chapter 32:34, (and 32:2,) where God expresses his indignation against the Israelites for their idolatry, by declaring that not himself, but an angel, should be henceforth their guide: but this, the people and Moses most earnestly deprecate [as a calamity and a judgment, whereas the present instance is a promise of favor and mercy, and is so acknowledged in Isaiah 62:8.] "That angel, therefore, is perfectly different from him who is spoken of in this passage before us, who is the same

that appeared to Moses, chapter iii, 2, and there likewise both speaks and acts as God himself." (Dathii Pentateuchus.)

That the Angel of Jehovah is constantly represented as Jehovah him-self, and therefore as a Divine person, is so manifest, that the means resorted to, to evade the force of the argument which so immediately flashes from it, acknowledge the fact. Those who deny the Divinity of our Lord, however, endeavor to elude the consequence according

to their respective creeds. The Arians, who think the appearing angel to have been Christ, but who yet deny him to be Jehovah himself, assume that this glorious but created being personated the Deity, and as his ambassador and representative spoke by his authority, and took his name. Thus a modern Arian observes,

"The Angel takes the name of Jehovah because it is a common maxim, loquitur legatus sermone mittentis eum, as an ambassador in the name of his king, or the

fecialis when he denounced war in the name of the Roman people; and what is done by the Angel is said to be done by God, according to another maxim, qui facit per alium9facit per se." (Taylor, Ben Mordecai.) The answer to this is, that though ambassadors speak in the name of their masters, they do not apply the names and titles of their masters to themselves, (9)-that the unquestionably created angels, mentioned in Scripture as appearing to men, declare that they were sent by God, and never

personate him, - that the prophets uniformly declare their commission to be from God, - that God himself declares, "Jehovah is my name, and my glory will I not give to another" - and yet that the appearing Angel calls him-self, as we have seen, by this incommunicable name in almost innumerable instances, and that though the object of the Mosaic dispensation was to preserve men from idolatry, yet this Angel claims and receives the exclusive worship both of the patriarchs to whom he

occasionally appeared, and the Jews among whom he visibly resided for ages. It is therefore a proposition too monstrous to be for a moment sustained, that a created being of any kind should thus allure men into idolatry, by acting the Deity, assuming his name, and attributing to himself God's peculiar and incommunicable perfections and honor. (1) The Arian hypothesis on this subject is well answered by even a Socinian writer. "The whole transaction on Mount Sinai shows that

Jehovah was present, and acted, and not another for him.

It is the God that had delivered them out of Egypt, with whom they were to enter into covenant as their God, and who thereupon accepted them as his people, who was the author of their religion and laws, and who himself delivered to them those ten commands, the most sacred part.

There is nothing to lead us to imagine that the person, who was their God, did not speak in his own name; not

the least intimation that here was another representing him." (Lindsey's Apology.)

(9) "An earthly ambassador indeed represents the person of his prince, is supposed to be clothed with his authority, and speaks and acts in his name. But who ever heard of an ambassador assuming the very name of his sovereign, or being honoured with it by others? Would one in this character be permitted to say, / George, I Louis, I Frederic? As the idea is ridiculous, the action

would justly be accounted high treason." (jamieson's Vindication.) (1) - histrioniam exercuisse, in qua Dei nomen assumat, et omnia quo Dei sunt, sibi attribuat.

(Bishop Bull)

The author of "the Essay on Spirit" attempts to meet this by alleging that "the Hebrews were far from being explicit and accurate in their style, and that it was customary for prophets and angels to speak in the name and character of God." The reply of Dr. Randolph is

able and decisive, and as this is a point of great importance, its introduction will not appear unnecessary.

"Some, to evade these strong proofs of our Lord's Divinity, have asserted that this was only a created angel appearing in the name or person of the Father; it being customary in Scripture for one person to sustain the character, and act and speak in the name of another. But these assertions want proof. I find no instances of one person acting and speaking

in the name of another, without first declaring in whose name he acts and speaks. The instances usually alleged are nothing to the purpose. If we sometimes find an angel in the book of Revelation speaking in the name of God, yet from the context it will be easy to show that this angel was the great Angel, the Angel of the Covenant. But if there should be some instances, in the poetical or prophetical parts of Scripture, of an abrupt change of persons, where the person speaking is not

particularly specified, this will by no means come up to the case before us. Here is a person sustaining the name and character of the most high God, from one end of the Bible to the other; bearing his glorious and fearful name, the incommunicable name Jehovah, expressive of his necessary existence; sitting in the throne of God; dwelling and presiding in his temple; delivering laws in his name; giving out oracles; hearing prayers; forgiving sins. And yet these writers would persuade us that this was

only a tutelary angel; that a creature was the God of Israel, and that to this creature all their service and worship was directed; that the great God, ' whose name is Jealous,' was pleased to give his glory, his worship, his throne to a creature. What is this but to make the law of God himself introductory of the same idolatry that was practiced by all the nations of the heathen? But we are told that bold figures of speech are common in the Hebrew language, which is not to be tied down in its interpretation to the

severer rules of modern criticism. We may be assured that these opinions are indefensible, which cannot be supported without charging the word of God with want of propriety or perspicuity. Such pretences might be borne with, if the question were about a phrase or two in the poetical or prophetical parts of Scripture. But this, if it be a figure, is a figure which runs through the whole Scripture. And a bold interpreter must he be, who supposes that such figures are perpetually and

uniformly made use of in a point of such importance, without any meaning at all. This is to confound the use Df language, to make the Holy Scripture a mysterious unintelligible book, sufficient to prove nothing, or rather to prove anything, which a wild imagination shall suggest." (Randolph's Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity.)

If the Arian account of the Angel of Jehovah be untenable, the Socinian notion will be found equally unsupported, and indeed ridiculous. Dr.

Priestley assumes the marvelous doctrine of "occasional personality," and thinks that "in some cases angels were nothing more than temporary appearances, and no permanent beings; the mere organs of the Deity, assumed for the purpose of making himself known." He speaks therefore of "a power occasionally emitted, and then taken back again into its source;" of this power being vested with a temporary personality, and thinks this possible! Little cause had

the doctor and his adherents to talk of the mystery and absurdity of the doctrine of three persons in one Godhead, who can make a person out of a power, emitted and then drawn back again to its source; a temporary person, without individual subsistence! The wildness of this fiction is its own refutation; but that the Angel of Jehovah was not this temporary occasional person, produced or "emitted" for the occasion of these appearances, is made certain by Abraham's "walking before this Angel

of the Lord," that is, ordering his life and conversation in his sight all the days of his life by Jacob calling him the Angel of the Lord who had "fed him all his life long;" and by this also, that the same person who was called by him-self and by the Jews "the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob," was the God of the chosen people in all their generations. Mr. Lindsey says "that the outward token of the presence of God is what is generally meant by the Angel of God, when not particularly specified and

appropriated otherwise; that which manifested his appearance, whatever it was;"

and this opinion commonly obtains among the Socinians. "The Angel of the Lord was the visible symbol of the Divine presence." (Belsham.) This notion, however, involves a whole train of absurdities. The term, the "Angel of Jehovah" is not at all accounted for by a visible symbol of clouds, light, fire, &c, unless that symbol be considered as distinct from Jehova h. We have

then the name Jehovah given to a cloud, a light, a fire, &c; the fire is the Angel of the Lord, and yet the Angel of the Lord calls to Moses out of the fire. This visible symbol says to Abraham, "By myself I have sworn," for these are said to be the words of the Angel of Jehovah; and this Angel, the visible symbol, spake to Moses on Mount Sinai: such are the absurdities which flow from error! Most clearly therefore is it determined on the testimony of several scriptures; and by necessary induction from

the circumstances attending the numerous appearances of the Angel of Jehovah in the Old Testament, that the person thus manifesting himself, and thus receiving supreme worship, was not a created angel as the Arians would have it, nor a meteor, an atmospheric appearance, the worthy theory of modern Socinians, but that he was a divine person.

2. It will be necessary to show that this Divine person was not God the Father.

The following argument has been adopted in proof of this: "No man hath seen God at any time.

Ye have neither heard his voice at any time nor seen his shape. Not that any man hath seen the Father. It is however said in the Old Testament, that God frequently appeared under the patriarchal and Levitical dispensations, and therefore we must conclude that the God who appeared was God the Son."

Plausible as this argument is, it cannot be depended

upon; for that the Father never manifested himself to men, as distinct from the Son, is contradicted by two express testimonies. We have seen that the Angel, in whom was the name of God, promised as the conductor of the Israelites through the wilderness, was a Divine person. But he who promised to "send him," must be a different person to the angel sent, and that person could be no other than the Father. "Behold, I send an angel before thee," &c. On this occasion, therefore, Moses

heard the voice of the Father.

Again, at the baptism of Jesus the voice of the Father was heard, declaring, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." The above passages must be therefore interpreted to accord with these facts. They express the pure spirituality and invisibility of God, and can no more be argued against a sensible manifestation of God by audible sounds, and appearances, than the declaration to Moses, "No man can see my face and

live." There was an important sense in which Moses neither did nor could see God; and yet it is equally true, that he both saw him and heard him. He saw the "backward parts" but not the "face of God." (2) (2) Imperscrutabilem Dei essentiam et majestatem. (Vatable.)

The manifestation of the Father was however very rare; as appears from by far the greater part of these Divine appearances being expressly called appearances of the Angel of the Lord. The Jehovah who

appeared to Abram in the case of Sodom was an angel. The Jehovah who appeared to Hagar, is said also to be "the Angel of the Lord." It was "the Angel of Jehovah from heaven"

who sware by himself to Abraham, "In blessing I will bless thee." Jacob calls the "God of Bethel," that is, the God who appeared to him there, and to whom he vowed his vows, "the Angel of God "In blessing Joseph, he calls the God " in whose presence my fathers, Abraham and Isaac have walked," the Angel who

had redeemed him from all evil. "I am that I am," when he spoke to Moses out of the bush, is termed the Angel of Jehovah. The God who spake these words and said, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," is called the Angel who spake to Moses in the Mount Sinai. The Being who dwelt in a fiery cloud, the visible token of the presence of God, and took up his residence over the ark, in the holiest place, and there received the constant worship of the Jews, is called the Angel of the

Lord; and so in many other instances.

Nor is there any reason for stretching the point to exclude in all cases the visible or audible agency of the Father, from the Old Testament; no advantage in the least is gained by it, and it cannot be maintained without sanctioning by example the conduct of the opposers of truth, in giving forced and unnatural expositions to several passages of Scripture. This ought to be avoided, and a consistency of fair honest

interpretation be maintained throughout. It is amply sufficient for the important argument with which we are now concerned, to prove, not that the Father was never manifested in his own person; but that the Angel of the Lord, whose appearances are so often recorded, is not the Father. This is clear from his appellation angel, with respect to which there can be but two interpretations. It is either a name descriptive of nature or of office. In the first view it is generally employed in the

sacred Scriptures to designate one of an order of intelligences superior to man, and often employed in the service of man as the ministers of God, but still beings finite and created. We have however already proved that the Angel of the Lord is not a creature, and he is not therefore called an angel with reference to his nature. The term must then be considered as a term of office. He is called the Angel of the Lord, because he was the messenger of the Lord; because he was sent to execute his will, and

to be his visible image and representative. His office therefore under this appellation was ministerial; but ministration is never attributed to the Father. He who was sent must be a distinct person from him by whom he was sent; the messenger from him whose message he brought, and whose will he performed. The Angel of Jehovah is therefore a different person from the Jehovah whose messenger he was, and yet the Angel himself is Jehovah, and, as we have proved, truly Divine.

Thus does the Old Testament most clearly reveal to us, in the case of Jehovah and the Angel of Jehovah, two Divine persons, while it still maintains its great fundamental principle, that there is but one God.

3. The third step in this argument is, that the Divine person, called so often the Angel of Jehovah in the Old Testament, was the promised and future Christ, and consequently Jesus, the Lord and Savior of the Christian Church.

We have seen, that it was the Angel of Jehovah who gave the law to the Israelites, and that in his own name9 though still an angel, a messenger in the transaction; being at once servant and Lord, angel and Jehovah, circumstances which can only be explained on the hypothesis of his Divinity, and for which neither Arianism nor Socinianism can give any solution. He therefore was the person who made the covenant, usually called the Mosaic, with the children of Israel. The Prophet Jeremiah

however expressly says, that the new covenant with Israel was to be made by the same person who had made the old. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that / made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt." The Angel of Jehovah, who led the Israelites out of Egypt and gave them their law, is here plainly introduced as the author of the new

covenant. If then, as we learn from the Apostle Paul, this new covenant predicted by Jeremiah is the Christian dispensation, and Christ be its author; the Christ of the New Testament, and the Angel of Jehovah of the Old, are the same person.

Equally striking is the celebrated prediction in Malachi, the last of the prophets. "Behold I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare my way before me; and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his

temple, even the messenger of the covenant whom ye delight in; behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts."

The characters under which the person who is the subject of this prophecy is described, are, the Lord, a sovereign Ruler, (3) the owner of the temple, and therefore a Divine prince or governor, he "shall come to his temple" "The temple," says Bishop Horsley, "in the writings of a Jewish prophet, cannot be otherwise understood, according to the literal

meaning, than of the temple at Jerusalem. Of this temple, therefore, the person to come is here expressly called the Lord. The lord of any temple, in the language of all writers, and in the natural meaning of the phrase, is the divinity to whose worship it is consecrated. To no other divinity the temple of Jerusalem was consecrated than the true and everlasting God, the Lord Jehovah, the Maker of heaven and earth.

Here, then, we have the express testimony of

Malachi, that the Christ, the Deliverer, whose coming he announces, was no other than the Jehovah of the Old Testament. Jehovah had delivered the Israelites from the Egyptian bondage; and the same Jehovah was to come in person to his temple, to effect the greater and more general deliverance of which the former was but an imperfect type."

(3) The same word is often applied to magistrates, and even fathers; but J H. Michaelis says, that when it occurs as in this place with

the prefix, it is appropriated only to God.

He bears also the same title, angel or messenger, as he whose appearances in the Old Testament have been enumerated.

"The Messenger of the Covenant, therefore, is Jehovah's messenger;- if his messenger, his servant; for a message is a service: it implies a person sending, and a person sent. In the person who sendeth there must be authority to send, - submission to that authority in the person sent.

The Messenger, therefore, of the Covenant, is the servant of the Lord Jehovah: but the same person who is the Messenger, is the Lord Jehovah himself, not the same person with the sender, but bearing the same name; because united in that mysterious nature and undivided substance which the name imports. The same person, therefore, is servant and Lord; and, by uniting these characters in the same person, what does the prophet but describe that great mystery of the

Gospel, the union of the nature which governs, and the nature which serves, - the union of the Divine and human nature in the person of the Christ?" (Horsleys Sermons.) Now this prophecy is expressly applied to Christ by St. Mark. - "The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee." It follows from this, that Jesus is the Lord, the Lord of the temple, the Messenger of the Covenant mentioned in

the prophecy; and bearing these exact characters of the appearing Angel Jehovah of the Old Testament, who was the King of the Jews; whose temple was his, because he resided in it, and so was called "the house of the Lord;" and who was "the Messenger" of their Covenant; the identity of the persons cannot be mistaken. One coincidence is singularly striking. It has been proved that the Angel Jehovah had his residence in the Jewish tabernacle and temple, and that he took possession, or came

suddenly to both, at their dedication, and filled them with his glory. On one occasion Jesus himself, though in his state of humiliation, comes in public procession to the temple at Jerusalem, and calls it "his own," thus at once declaring that he was the ancient and rightful Lord of the temple, and appropriating to himself this eminent prophecy. Bishop Horsley has introduced this circumstance in his usual striking and convincing manner:-

"A third time Jesus came still more remarkably as the Lord to his temple, when he came up from Galilee to celebrate the last Passover, and made that public entry at Jerusalem which is described by all the evangelists. It will be necessary to enlarge upon the particulars of this interesting story: for the right understanding of our Savior's conduct upon this occasion depends so much upon seeing certain leading circumstances in a proper light, - upon a recollection of ancient prophecies, and an attention to the customs

of the Jewish people, - that I am apt to suspect, few now-a-days discern in this extraordinary transaction what was clearly seen in it at the time by our Lord's disciples, and in some measure understood by his enemies. I shall present you with an orderly detail of the story, and comment upon the particulars as they arise: and I doubt not but that by God's assistance I shall teach you to perceive in this public entry of Jesus of Nazareth, (if you have not perceived it before,) a conspicuous

advent of the great Jehovah to his temple. -

Jesus, on his last journey from Galilee to Jerusalem, stops at the foot of Mount Olivet, and sends two of his disciples to a neighboring village to provide an ass's colt to convey him from that place to the city, distant not more than half a mile. The colt is brought, and Jesus is seated upon it. This first circumstance must be well considered; it is the key to the whole mystery of the story. What could be his meaning in choosing this singular

conveyance? It could not be that the fatigue of the short journey which remained was likely to be too much for him afoot; and that no better animal was to be procured. Nor was the ass in these days (though it had been in earlier ages an animal in high esteem in the east) used for traveling or for state by persons of the first condition, - that this conveyance should be chosen for the grandeur or propriety of the appearance. Strange as it may seem, the coming to Jerusalem upon an ass's

colt was one of the prophetical characters of the Messiah; and the great singularity of it had perhaps been the reason that this character had been more generally attended to than any other: so that there was no Jew who was not apprized that the Messiah was to come to the holy city in that manner. Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! shout, O daughter of Jerusalem ' saith Zechariah; ' Behold, thy King cometh unto thee! He is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, even a colt,

the foal of an ass!' And this prophecy the Jews never understood of any other person than the Messiah. Jesus, therefore, by seating himself upon the ass's colt in order to go to Jerusalem, without any possible inducement either of grandeur or convenience, openly declared himself to be that King who was to come, and at whose coming in that manner Zion was to rejoice. And so the disciples, if we may judge from what immediately followed, understood this proceeding; for no sooner did they see their master

seated on the colt, than they broke out into transports of the highest joy, as if in this great sight they had the full contentment of their utmost wishes; conceiving, as it should seem, the sanguine hope that the kingdom was this instant to be restored to Israel. They strewed the way which Jesus was to pass with the green branches of the trees which grew beside it; a mark of honor in the east, never paid but to the greatest emperors on occasions of the highest pomp. They proclaimed

him the long-expected heir of David's throne, -

the Blessed One coming in the name of the Lord; that is, in the language of Malachi, the Messenger of the Covenant: and they rent the skies with the exulting exclamation of 'Hosanna in the highest!' On their way to Jerusalem, they are met by a great multitude from the city, whom the tidings had no sooner reached than they ran out in eager joy to join his triumph. When they reached Jerusalem, 'the whole city,' says the blessed

evangelist, 'was moved.' Here recollect, that it was now the season of the Passover. The Passover was the highest festival of the Jewish nation, the anniversary of that memorable night when Jehovah led his armies out of Egypt with a high hand and an extended arm, - 'a night much to be remembered to the Lord of the children of Israel in their generations;' and much indeed it was remembered. The devout Jews flocked at this season to Jerusalem, not only from every corner of Judea,

but from the remotest countries whither God had scattered them; and the numbers of the strangers that were annually collected in Jerusalem during this festival are beyond imagination. These strangers, who living at a distance knew little of what had been passing in Judea since their last visit, were they who were moved (as well they might be) with wonder and astonishment, when Jesus, so humble in his equipage, so honoured in his numerous attendants, appeared within the city gates; and

everyone asks his neighbor, ' Who is this?' It was replied by some of the natives of Judea, - but as I conceive, by none of the disciples; for any of them at this time would have given another answer, - it was replied, 'This is the Nazarene, the great prophet from Galilee.' Through the throng of these astonished spectators the procession passed by the public streets of Jerusalem to the temple, where immediately the sacred porticoes resound with the continued

hosannas of the multitudes.

The chief priests and scribes are astonished and alarmed: they request Jesus himself to silence his followers. Jesus, in the early part of his ministry, had always been cautious of any public display of personal consequence, lest the malice of his enemies should be too soon provoked, or the unadvised zeal of his friends should raise civil commotions. But now that his work on earth was finished in all but the last painful part of it, - now

that he had firmly laid the foundations of God's kingdom in the hearts of his disciples, - now that the apostles were prepared and instructed for their office, - now that the days of vengeance on the Jewish nation were at hand, and it mattered not how soon they should incur the displeasure of the Romans their masters, -

Jesus lays aside a reserve which could be no longer useful; and, instead of checking the zeal of his followers, he gives a new alarm to the chief priests

and scribes, by a direct and firm assertion of his right to the honors that were so largely shown to him. ' If these,' says he, ' were silent, the stones of this building would be endued with a voice to proclaim ray titles:' and then, as on a former occasion, he drove out the traders; but with a higher tone of authority, calling it his own house, and saying, 'My house is the house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves.' You have now the stories, in all its circumstances, faithfully collected from the four

evangelists; nothing exaggerated, but set in order, and perhaps somewhat illustrated by an application of old prophecies, and a recollection of Jewish customs. Judge for yourselves whether this was not an advent of the Lord Jehovah taking personal possession of his temple." (Horsley.) But it is not only in these passages that the name Jehovah, the appellation of the appearing Angel of the Old Testament, and other titles of Divinity, are given to Messiah; and if Jesus be

Messiah, then are they his titles and as truly mark his Divinity.

"The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, (Jehovah,) make straight in the desert a high way for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every, mountain shall be made low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain, and the glory of the Lord (Jehovah) shall be revealed,, and all flesh shall see it together." This being spoken of him of whom

John the Baptist was to be the forerunner; and the application having been afterward expressly made by the Baptist to our Lord, it is evident that he is the person "to whom the prophet attributes the incommunicable name of Jehovah, and styles him 'our God.'" -

(Wogan.)

Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the- lord by the prophet, saying, Behold a virgin shall conceive, and shall bring forth a Son, and they shall call his name

emanuel, which being interpreted is God with us." Here another prediction of Isaiah is expressly applied to Jesus. "Thou shalt bring forth a son, and shall call his name Jesus, and he shall be great, and the Lord God shall give to him the throne of his father David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever and ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end." These are the words of the angel to Mary, and obviously apply to our Lord the words of Isaiah, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the

government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and power there shall be no end, upon the throne of David to order and establish it forever." It is unnecessary at present to quote more of those numerous passages which speak of the future Messiah under Divine titles, and which are applied to Jesus as that Messiah actually manifested. They do not in so many words connect the

Angel of Jehovah with Jesus as the same person; but, taken with the passages above adduced, they present evidence of a very weighty character in favor of that position. A plurality of persons in the one Godhead is mentioned in the Jewish Scriptures; this plurality is restricted to three; one of them appears as the "acting God" of the patriarchal and Mosaic age; the prophets speak of a Divine person to come as the Messiah, bearing precisely the same titles; no one supposes this to be the Holy Ghost; it

cannot be the Father, seeing that Messiah is God's servant and God's messenger; and the only conclusion is, that the Messiah predicted is he who is known under the titles, Angel, Son of God, Word of God, in the Old Testament; and if Jesus be that Messiah, he is that Son, that Word, that Servant, that Messenger; and bearing the same Divine characters as the Angel of Jehovah, is that Angel himself, and is entitled in the Christian Church to all the homage

and worship which was paid to him in the Jewish.

There are, however, a few passages which in a still more distinct manner than any which have been introduced, except that from the prophecy of Jeremiah, identify Jesus Christ with the Angel of Jehovah in the patriarchal and Levitical dispensations; and a brief consideration of them will leave this important point completely established.

Let it then be recollected, that he who dwelt in the Jewish tabernacle, between

the cherubim, was the Angel Jehovah. In Psalm 68, which was written on the removal of the ark to Mount Zion, he is expressly addressed. "This is the hill which God desireth" to dwell in;" and again, "They have seen thy goings, O God, my King, in thy sanctuary." But the Apostle Paul, Eph. 4:8, applies this psalm to Christ, and considers this very ascent of the Angel Jehovah to Mount Zion as a prophetic type of the ascent of Jesus to the celestial Zion. - "Wherefore he saith, when he ascended on high, he led

captivity captive," &c. The conclusion, therefore, is, that the Angel Jehovah who is addressed in the psalm, and Christ, are the same person. This is marked with equal strength in verse 29. The psalm, let it be observed, is determined by apostolical authority to be a prophecy of Christ, as indeed its terms intimate; and with reference to the future conquests of Messiah, the prophet exclaims, "Because of thy temple at Jerusalem shall kings bring presents unto thee." The future Christ is spoken of as one

having then a temple at Jerusalem.

It was the glory of the Angel Jehovah, the resident God of the temple, which Isaiah saw in the vision recorded in the sixth chapter of his prophecy before adduced; but the Evangelist John expressly declares that on that occasion the prophet saw the glory of Christ add spake of him.

Christ therefore was the Lord of hosts whose glory filled the temple.

St. Peter calls the Spirit of Jehovah, by which the prophets "prophesied of the grace that should come, the Spirit of Christ" He also informs us that "Christ was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit, by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison, which sometime were disobedient when once the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing." - Now whatever may be the full meaning of this difficult passage, Christ is clearly represented as preaching

by his Spirit in the days of Noah, that is, inspiring Noah to preach. Let this be collated with the declaration of Jehovah before the flood, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he is flesh, yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years," during which period of delay and long suffering, Noah was made by him, from whom alone inspiration can come, a preacher of righteousness; and it is clear that Christ, and the appearing Jehovah of the antediluvian world, are supposed by St. Peter

to have been the same person. In the eleventh chapter of the Hebrews, Moses is said to have esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; a passage of easy interpretation, when it is admitted that the Jehovah of the Israelites, whose name and worship Moses professed, and Christ, were the same person. For this worship he was reproached by the Egyptians, who preferred their own idolatry, and treated, as all apostates do, the true religion, the pure worship

of former ages from which they had departed, with contempt. To be reproached for the sake of Jehovah, and to be reproached for Christ, were convertible phrases with the apostle, because he considered Jehovah and Christ to be the same person.

"In St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians, we read, ' Neither let us tempt christ, as some of them (that is, the Jews in the wilderness) also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents,' 10:9.

The pronoun him auton, must be understood after 'tempted,' and it is found in some MSS., though not sufficiently numerous to warrant its insertion in the text. It is, however, necessarily implied, and refers to Christ just before mentioned. The Jews in the wilderness here are said to have tempted some person; and to understand by that person any other than Christ, who is just before named, is against all grammar, which never allows without absolute necessity any other accusative to be

understood by the verb than that of some person or thing before mentioned in the same sentence. The conjunction xai, also establishes this interpretation beyond doubt: '

Neither let us tempt christ as some of them also tempted'-tempted whom? The answer clearly is, as they also tempted Christ. If Christ then was the person whom the Israelites tempted in the wilderness, he unavoidably becomes the Jehovah of the Old Testament." (4) (4)

Holden's Testimonies. See this text, so fatal to the Socinian scheme, triumphantly established against the liberty of their criticisms, in Dr. Magee's Postscript to Appendix, p. 211, &c.

This is rendered the more striking, when the passage to which the apostle refers is given at length. "Ye shall not tempt the Lord your God, as ye tempted him in Massah." Now what could lead the apostle to substitute Christ, in the place of the Lord your God? "Neither let us tempt

Christ, as some of them also tempted" Christ, for that is the accusative which must be supplied.

Nothing certainly but that the idea was familiar to him, that Christ, and the Angel Jehovah, who conducted and governed the Israelites, were the same person.

Heb. 12:25, 26: "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh; for if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh

from heaven. Whose voice then shook the earth, but now he hath promised," &c.

This passage also is decisive as a proof that the Angel of Jehovah, and our Lord, are the same person. "Him that speaketh from heaven," the context determines to be Christ; "him that spake on earth" is probably Moses. The "voice" that then "shook the earth," was the voice of him that gave the law, at the sound of which the mountain trembled and shook. He who gave the law we have already proved,

from the authority of Scripture, to have been the Angel of Jehovah, and the apostle declares that the same person now speaks to us "from heaven," in the Gospel, and is therefore the Lord Christ. Dr. Mac Knight says, that it was not the Son's voice which shook the earth, because it was not the Son who gave the law. In this he is clearly contradicted by St.

Stephen, and the whole Jewish history. The proto-martyr in his defense, expressly says, that it was "the Angel" who spake with

Moses in the mount; and here the Apostle Paul declares, that it was the voice of Christ which then shook the earth. Nothing can more certainly prove than this collation of Scriptures, that the Son gave the law, and that "the Angel" who spake to Moses, and Christ, are the same person.

The above passage, in its necessary grammatical construction, so certainly marks out Christ as the person whose voice shook the earth at the giving of the law, that the Socinians,

in their New Version of the Testament, have chosen to get rid of a testimony which no criticism could evade, by daringly and willfully corrupting the text itself, and without any authority whatever, they read, instead of "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh," "See that ye refuse not God that speaketh;" thus introducing a new antecedent. This instance of a willful perversion of the very text of the word of God, has received its merited reprobation from those eminent critics who

have exposed the dishonesties, the ignorance, and the licentious criticisms, of what is called an

"Improved Version" of the New Testament.

These views are confirmed by the testimonies of the early fathers, to whom the opinions of the apostles, on this subject, (one not at all affected by the controversies of the day,) would naturally descend. The opinions of the ancient Jews, which are also decidedly confirmatory,

will be given in their proper place.

Justin Martyr has delivered his sentiments very freely upon the Divine appearances. "Our Christ," he says, "conversed with Moses out of the bush, in the appearance of fire. And Moses received great strength from Christ, who spake to him in the appearance of fire." Again:- "The Jews are justly reproved, for imagining that the Father of all things spake to Moses, when indeed it was the Son of God, who is called the

Angel and the Messenger of the Father. He formerly appeared in the form of fire, and without a human shape, to Moses and the other prophets: but now-being made a man of the virgin," &c.

Irenaeus says, "The Scripture is full of the Son of God's appearing: sometimes to talk and eat with Abraham, at other times to instruct Noah about the measures of the ark; at another time to seek Adam; at another time to bring down judgment upon Sodom; then again, to

direct Jacob in the way; and again, to converse with Moses out of the bush."

Tertullian says, "It was the Son who judged men from the beginning, destroying that lofty tower, and confounding their languages, punishing the whole world with a flood of waters, and raining fire and brimstone upon Sodom and Gomorrah, the Lord pouring it down from the Lord: for he always descended to hold converse with men, from Adam even to the patriarchs and prophets, in visions, in

dreams, in mirrors, in dark sentences, always preparing his way from the beginning: neither was it possible, that the God who conversed with men upon earth, could be any other than that Word which was to be made flesh."

Clemens Alexandrinus says, "The Pedagogus appeared to Abraham, to Jacob, wrestled with him, and lastly, manifested himself to Moses." Again: "Christ gave the world the law of nature, and the written law of Moses. Wherefore, the Lord

deriving from one fountain both the first and second precepts which he gave, neither overlooked those who were before the law, so as to leave them without law, nor suffered those who minded not the philosophy of the barbarians to do as they pleased. He gave to the one precepts, to the other philosophy, and concluded them in unbelief till his coming, when, whosoever believes not is without excuse."

Origen says, "My Lord Jesus Christ descended to the earth more than once.

He came down to Esaias, to Moses, and to every one of the prophets." Again:- "That our blessed Savior did sometimes become as an angel, we may be induced to believe, if we consider the appearances and speeches of angels, who in some texts have said, ' I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac,'" &c.

Theophilus of Antioch also declares, "that it was the Son of God who appeared to Adam immediately after the fall, who, assuming the person of the Father and

the Lord of all, came in paradise under the person of God, and conversed with Adam."

The synod of Antioch:- "The Son" say they, "is sometimes called an Angel, and sometimes the Lord; sometimes God. For it is impious to imagine, that the God of the universe is anywhere called an angel. But the Messenger of the Father is the Son, who himself is Lord and God: for it is written, The Angel of the great council."

Cyprian observes, that "the Angel who appeared to the

patriarch is Christ and God." And this he confirms by producing a number of those passages from the Old Testament, where it is said, that an Angel of the Lord appeared and spake in the name of God.

Hilary speaks to the same purpose:- "He who is called the Angel of God, the same is Lord and God. For the Son of God, according to the prophet, is the Angel of the great council. That the distinction of persons might be entire, he is called the Angel of God; for he who is God of God, the

same also is the Angel (or Messenger) of God; and yet, at the same time, that due honor might be paid, he is also called Lord and God."

St. Basil says, "Who then is it that is called both an angel and God? Is it not He, whose name, we are told, is called the Angel of the great Covenant? For though it was in aftertimes that he became the Angel of the great Covenant, yet even before that, he did not disdain the title of an Angel, or Messenger." Again:- "It is manifest to

everyone, that where the same person is styled both an Angel and God, it must be meant of the only begotten, who manifests himself to mankind in different generations, and declares the will of the Father to his saints. Where-fore, he who, at his appearing to Moses, called himself I am, cannot be conceived to be any other person than God, the Word who was in the beginning with God."

Other authorities may be seen in Waterland's

Defense of Queries, that decidedly refutes Dr.

Samuel Clarke, who pretends, in order to cover his Arianism, that the fathers represent the angel as speaking in the person of the Father.

Two objections to this doctrine, taken from the Scriptures, are answered without difficulty.

"God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son."

To those only who deny the manifestation and agency of the Father in every case in the Old Testament, this passage presents a difficulty. God the Father is certainly meant by the apostle, and he is said to have spoken by the prophets. But this is no difficulty to those who, though they contend that the ordinary appearances of the Deity were those of the Son, yet allow the occasional manifestation of the Father. He is the fountain of inspiration. The Son is sent by the Father, but the Spirit is sent by the

Father and by the Son. This is the order in the New Testament, and also, as many passages show in the Old. The Spirit sent by the Father, qualified the prophets to speak unto "our fathers."

The apostle, however, says nothing more than that there was an agency of the Father in sending the prophets, which does not exclude that of the Son also; for the opposition lies in the outward visible and standing means of conveying the knowledge of the will of God to men,

which under the law was by mere men, though prophets; under the Gospel, by the incarnate Son.

Communication by prophets under the law, did not exclude other communications by the Son in his Divine character; and communication by the Son under the Gospel, does not exclude other communications by apostles, evangelists, and Christian prophets. The text is not therefore an exclusive proposition either way. It is not clear, indeed,

that any direct opposition at all is intended in the text, but a simple declaration of the equal authority of both dispensations, and the peculiar glory of the latter, whose human minister and revealer was the Son of God in our nature.

The second objection rests upon a passage in the same epistle. "If the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so

great salvation, which at first began to be spoken by the Lord?"

To understand this passage, it is to be noted, that the apostle refers to the judicial law of Moses, which had its prescribed penalty for every "transgression and disobedience." Now this law was not, like the Decalogue, spoken by God himself, but by angels. For after the voice of God had spoken the Ten Commandments, the people entreated that God would not speak to them

anymore. Accordingly, Moses says, Deut. 5:22, "These words," the Decalogue, "the Lord spake unto all your assembly in the mount, out of the midst of the fire, with a great voice, and he added no more, and he wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me." The rest, "both the judicial and the ceremonial law, was delivered, and the covenant was made, by the mediation of Moses: and therefore the apostle says, Gal. 3:19, 'The law was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator:' hence

it is called the law of Moses. And the character given of it in the Pentateuch is this, - these are the statutes, and judgments, and laws, which the Lord made between him and the children of Israel in Mount Sinai, by the hand of Moses." (Randolph Prael. Theolog.) Nor does the apostle's argument respect the author of the law, for no one can suppose that angels were its authors, nor the giver of the law, for angels have no such authority; but the medium through which it was

communicated, or "spoken." In the case of the Decalogue, that medium was the Lord, the Angel Jehovah himself in majesty; but in the body of judicial and ceremonial laws, to which he clearly refers, angels and Moses. The visible medium by which the Gospel was communicated, was the Son of God made flesh. That word was "spoken by the Lord," not only in his personal, but in his mediatorial character; and, by that wonderful condescension, its importance, and the

danger of neglecting it, were marked in the most eminent and impressive manner.

It has now therefore been established that the Angel Jehovah, and Jesus Christ our Lord, are the same person; and this is the first great argument by which his Divinity is established. He not only existed before his incarnation, but is seen at the head of the religious institutions of his own Church, up to the earliest ages. We trace the manifestations of the same person from Adam to

Abraham; from Abraham to Moses; from Moses to the prophets; from the prophets to Jesus.

Under every manifestation he has appeared in the form of God, never thinking it robbery to be equal with God. "Dressed in the appropriate robes of God's state, wearing God's crown, and wielding God's scepter," he has ever received Divine homage and honor. No name is given to the Angel Jehovah, which is not given to Jehovah Jesus; no attribute is ascribed to the one,

which is not ascribed to the other; the worship which was paid to the one by patriarchs and prophets, was paid to the other by evangelists and apostles; and the Scriptures declare them to be the same august person, - the image of the Invisible, whom no man can see and live;- the Redeeming Angel, the Redeeming Kinsman, and the Redeeming God.

That the titles with which our Lord is invested are unequivocal declarations of absolute Divinity, will be

the subject of the next chapter

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32 THE TITLES OF CHRIST

Various proofs were adduced, in the last chapter, that the visible Jehovah of the Old Testament is to be regarded as a Being distinct from the father, yet having Divine titles ascribed to him, being arrayed with Divine attributes, and performing Divine works equal to his. That this

august Being was the same who afterward appeared as "the christ," in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, was also proved; and the conclusion of that branch of the argument was, that Jesus Christ is, in an absolute sense, a Divine person, and as such, is to be received and adored.

It is difficult to conceive any point more satisfactorily established in the Scriptures than the personal appearance of our Lord, during the patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations, under a

Divine character; but this argument, so far from having exhausted the proof of his Godhead, is only another in that series of rising steps by which we are, at length, conducted to the most unequivocal and ample demonstration of this great and fundamental doctrine.

The next argument is stated at the head of this chapter. If the titles given to Christ are such as can designate a Divine Being, and a Divine Being only, then is he, to whom they are by inspired authority

ascribed, Divine; or, otherwise, the Word of truth must stand charged with practicing a direct deception upon mankind, and that in a fundamental article of religion. This is our argument, and we proceed to the illustration.

The first of these titles which calls for our attention is that of Jehovah. Whether "the Angel Jehovah" were the future Christ or not, does not affect this case. Even Socinians acknowledge Jesus to be the Messiah; and if this is one of the

titles of the promised Messiah, it is, consequently a title of our Lord, and must be ascribed to him by all who believe Jesus to be the Messiah.

So many instances of this were given in the preceding chapter, that it is unnecessary to repeat them; and indeed the fact, that the name Jehovah is applied to the Messiah in many passages of the Old Testament, is admitted by the manner in which the argument, deduced from this fact, is objected to by our opponents. "The

Jewish Cabbalists," says Dr. Priestley, "might easily admit that the Messiah might be called Jehovah, without supposing that he was anything more than a man, who had no existence before his birth." "Several things in the Scriptures are called by the name of Jehovah; as, Jerusalem is called Jehovah our Righteousness." (History of Early Opinions.) They are not, however, the Jewish interpreters only who give the name Jehovah to Messiah; but the inspired prophets themselves, in passages which, by the

equally inspired evangelists and apostles, are applied to Jesus. No instance can be given in which any being, acknowledged by all to be a created being, is called Jehovah in the Scriptures, or was so called among the Jews. The peculiar sacredness attached to this name among them was a sufficient guard against such an application of it in their common language; and as for the Scriptures, they explicitly represent it as peculiar to Divinity itself. "I am Jehovah, that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another"

"I am Jehovah, and there is none else, there is no God beside me"

"Thou, whose name alone is Jehovah, art the most high, above all the earth." The peculiarity of the name is often strongly stated by Jewish commentators, which sufficiently refutes Dr.

Priestley, who affirms that they could not, on that account, conclude the Messiah to be more than a man. Kimschi paraphrases Isaiah 43:8, "Jehovah, that is my name" - "that name is proper to me" On Hosea

12:5, "Jehovah his memorial," he says, "In the name El and Elohim, he communicates with others; but, in this name, he communicates with none." Aben Ezra, on Exodus 3:14, proves, at length, that this name is proper to God. (Hoornbeck, Socin. Confut.) It is, surely, a miserable pretence to allege, that this name is sometimes given to places. It is so; but only in composition with some other word, and not surely as indicative of any quality in the places themselves, but as memorials of the

acts and goodness of Jehovah himself, as manifested in those localities. So "Jehovah-Jireh, in the mount of the Lord it shall be seen," or, "the Lord will see or provide," referred to his interposition to save Isaac, and, probably, to the provision of the future sacrifice of Christ. The same observation may be made as to Jehovah Nissi, Jehovah Shallum, &c: they are names, not descriptive of places, but of events connected with them, which marked the interposition and character

of God himself. It is an unsettled point among critics whether Jah, which is sometimes found in composition as a proper name of a man, as Abijah, Jehovah is my father, Adonijah, Jehovah is my lord, be an abbreviation of Jehovah or not, so that the case will afford no ground of argument. But if it were, it would avail nothing, for it is found only in a combined form, and evidently relates not to the persons who bore these names, as a descriptive appellation, but to some connection which existed,

or was supposed to exist, between them and the Jehovah they acknowledged as their God. The cases would have been parallel, had our Lord been called Abijah, "Jehovah is my father," or Jedediah, "the beloved of Jehovah." Nothing, in that case, would have been furnished, so far as mere name was concerned, to distinguish him from his countrymen bearing the same appellatives; but he is called Jehovah himself, a name which the Scriptures give to no person whatever, except to each of the sacred

three, who stand forth, in the pages of the Old and New Testaments, crowned with this supreme and exclusive honor and eminence.

Nor is it true, that in Jeremiah 33:16, Jerusalem is called "Jehovah our Righteousness." The parallel passage in the same book, chap, 23:5, 6, sufficiently shows that this is not the name of Jerusalem, but the name of "the branch." Much criticism has been bestowed upon these passages to establish the

point, whether the clause ought to be rendered, "And this is the name by which the Lord shall call him, our Righteousness;" or "this is the name by which he shall be called, the Lord our Righteousness;" which last has, I think, been decisively established; but he would be a very exceptionable critic who should conclude either of them to be an appellative, not of Messiah, but of Jerusalem, contrary both to the scope of the passage and to the literal rendering of the words, words capable of somewhat different constructions, but

in no case capable of being applied either to the people of Judah, or to the city of Jerusalem.

The force of the argument from the application of the name Jehovah to Messiah may be thus stated:-

Whatever belongs to Messiah, that may and must be attributed to Jesus, as being the true and only Christ; and accordingly we have seen, that the evangelists and apostles apply those passages to our Lord, in which the Messiah is unequivocally called

Jehovah. But this is the peculiar and appropriate name of God; that name by which he is distinguished from all other beings, and which imports perfections so high and appropriate to the only living and true God, such as self- existence and eternity, that it can, in truth, be a descriptive appellation of no other being. It is, however, solemnly and repeatedly given to the Messiah; and, unless we can suppose Scripture to contradict itself, by making that a peculiar name which is not peculiar to him, and to

establish an inducement to that idolatry which it so sternly condemns, and an excuse for it, then this adorable name itself declares the absolute Divinity of him who is invested with it, and is to him, as well as to the Father, a name of revelation, a name descriptive of the attributes which can pertain only to essential Godhead.

This conclusion is corroborated by the constant use of the title "lord" as an appellation of Jesus, the Messiah, when

manifest in the flesh. His disciples not only applied to him those passages of the Old Testament, in which the Messiah is called Jehovah, but salute and worship him by a title which is of precisely the same original import, and which is, therefore, to be considered in many places of the Septuagint and the New Testament, an exact translation of the august name Jehovah, and fully equivalent to it in its import. (5) It is allowed, that it is also used as the translation of other names of God, which import

simply dominion, and that it is applied also to merely human masters and rulers. It is not, therefore, like the Jehovah of the Old Testament, an incommunicable name, but, in its highest sense, it is universally allowed to belong to God; and if, in this highest sense, it is applied to Christ, then is the argument valid, that in the sacred writers, whether used to express the self and independent existence of him who bears it, or that dominion which, from its nature and circumstances, must be Divine, it contains

a notation of true and absolute Divinity.

(5) Bishop Pearson, on the second article of the Creed, thus concludes a learned note on the etymology of Kurios, Lord: "From all which it undeniably appeareth, that the ancient signification of Kuro is the same with eimi, or uparcho sum, I am "

The first proof of this is, that, both in the Septuagint and by the writers of the New Testament, it is the term by which the name Jehovah is translated. The Socinians have a fiction

that Kupios properly answers to Adonai, because the Jews were wont, in reading, to substitute that name in place of Jehovah. But this is sufficiently answered by Bishop Pearson, who observes, that "it is not probable that the LXX should think Kurios to be the proper interpretation of Yahweh, and yet give it to Jehovah, only in the place of Adonai; for if they had, it would have followed, that when Adonai and Jehovah had met in one sentence, they would not have put another word for Adonai, and

placed Kurios for Jehovah, to which, of itself, according to their observation, it did not belong." "The reason also of the assertion is most uncertain; for, though it be confessed that the Masoreths did read Adonai, when they found Jehovah, and Josephus before them expresses the sense of the Jews of his age, that the tetragammaton was not to be pronounced, and before him Philo speaks as much, yet it followeth not from thence that the Jews were so superstitious above

three hundred years before, which must be proved before we can be assured that the LXX

read Adonai for Jehovah, and for that reason translated it Kurios." (Discourses on Creed.) The supposition is, however, wholly overturned by several passages, in which such an interchange of the names could not be made in the original, without manifestly depriving them of all meaning, and which absurdity could not, therefore, take place in a translation, and be thus

made permanent. It is sufficient to instance Exodus 6:2, 3, "I am the Lord, (Jehovah:) I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name Jehovah was I not known unto them." This, it is true, is rather an obscure passage; but, whatever may be its interpretation, this is clear, that a substitution of Adonai for Jehovah would deprive it of all meaning whatever, and yet here the LXX translate Jehovah by Kurios.

Kurios, Lord, is, then, the word into which the Greek of the Septuagint renders the name Jehovah; and, in all passages in which Messiah is called by that peculiar title of Divinity, we have the authority of this version to apply it, in its full and highest signification, to Jesus Christ, who is himself that Messiah. For this reason, and also because, as men inspired, they were directed to fit and proper terms, the writers of the New Testament apply this appellation to their Master, when they quote these

prophetic passages as fulfilled in him. They found it used in the Greek version of the Old Testament, in its highest possible import, as a rendering of Jehovah.

Had they thought Jesus less than God, they ought to have avoided, and must have avoided, giving to him a title which would mislead their readers; or else have intimated, that they did not use it in its highest sense as a title of Divinity, but in its very lowest, as a term of merely human courtesy, or, at best, of human dominion. But we have no

such intimation; and, if they wrote under the inspiration of the Spirit of Truth, it follows, that they used it as being understood to be fully equivalent to the title Jehovah itself. This their quotations will show. The Evangelist Matthew (3:3) quotes and applies to Christ the celebrated prophecy of Isaiah 40:3: "For this is he that was spoken of by the Prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." The other evangelists make the same

application of it, representing John as the herald of Jesus, the "Jehovah" of the prophet, and their

"Kurios." It was, therefore, in the highest possible sense that they used the term, because they used it as fully equivalent to Jehovah. So again, in Luke 1:16, 17: "And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the lord their God, and he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias." "him," unquestionably refers to "the Lord their God;" and

we have here a proof that Christ bears that eminent title of Divinity, so frequent in the Old Testament, "the lord God,"

Jehovah Aleim; and also that Kurios answered, in the view of an inspired writer, to the name Jehovah. On this point the Apostle Paul also adds his testimony, Romans 10:13, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the lord shall be saved;" which is quoted from Joel 2:32, "Whosoever shall call on the name of Jehovah shall be delivered." Other

passages might be added, but the argument does not rest upon their number; these are so explicit, that they are amply sufficient to establish the important conclusion, that, in whatever senses the term "Lord" may be used, and though the writers of the New Testament, like ourselves, use it occasionally in a lower sense, yet they use it also in its highest possible sense, and in its loftiest signification when they intended it to be understood as equivalent to Jehovah, and, in that

sense they apply it to Christ.

But, even when the title "lord" is not employed to render the name Jehovah, in passages quoted from the Old Testament, but is used as the common appellation of Christ, after his resurrection, the disciples so connect it with other terms, and with circumstances which so clearly imply Divinity, that it cannot reasonably be made a question but that they themselves considered it as a Divine title, and intended that it should be

so understood by their readers. In that sense they applied it to the Father, and it is clear, that they did not use it in a lower sense when they gave it to the Son. It is put absolutely, and by way of eminence, "the lord." It is joined with "GOD;" so in the passage above quoted from St. Luke, where Christ is called the lord GOD; and when Thomas, in an act of adoration, calls him "My lord and my God." When it is used to express dominion, that dominion is represented as absolute and universal, and,

therefore, Divine. "He is lord of all." "king of kings and lord of lords."" Thou, lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thy hands. They shall perish; but thou remainest: and they all shall wax old, as doth a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail."

Thus, then, the titles of "Jehovah" and "Lord" both prove the Divinity of our Savior; "for," as it is

remarked by Dr. Waterland, "if Jehovah signify the eternal, immutable God, it is manifest that the name is incommunicable, since there is but one God; and, if the name be incommunicable, then Jehovah can signify nothing but that one God, to whom, and to whom only, it is applied.

And if both these parts be true, and if it be true, likewise, that this name is applied to Christ, the consequence is irresistible, that Christ is the same one

God, not the same person, with the Father, to whom also the name Jehovah is attributed, but the same substance, the same being, in a word, the same Jehovah, thus revealed to be more persons than one."

God. That this title is attributed to Christ is too obvious to be wholly denied, though some of the passages which have been alleged as instances of this application of the term have been controverted. Even in this a great point is gained. Jesus Christ is called God: this the

adversaries of his Divinity are obliged to confess, and this confession admits, that the letter of Scripture is, therefore, in favor of orthodox opinions. It is, indeed, said, that the term God, like the term lord, is used in an inferior sense; but nothing is gained by this; nothing is, on that account, proved against the Deity of Christ; for it must still be allowed, that it is a term used in Scripture to express the Divine nature, and that it is so used generally. The question, therefore, is only limited to this, whether our Lord is

called God, in the highest sense of that appellation. This might, indeed, be argued from those passages in the Old Testament in which the title is given to the acting, manifested Jehovah, "the Lord God" of the Old Testament; but this having been anticipated, I confine myself chiefly to the evangelists and apostles.

Before that proof is adduced, which will most unequivocally show that Jesus Christ is called God, in the highest sense of that term, it will, however, be

necessary to show that, in its highest sense, it involves the notion of absolute Divinity. This has been denied: Sir Isaac Newton, who, on theological subjects, as Bishop Horsley observes, "went out like a common man," says that the word God "is a relative term, and has a regard to servants; it is true, it denotes a Being eternal, infinite, and absolutely perfect; but a Being, however eternal, infinite, and absolutely perfect, without dominion, would not be God." (Philos. Nat. Mathce. in calce.) This

relative notion of the term, as itself importing strictly nothing more than dominion, was adopted by Dr. S. Clarke, and made use of to support his semi-Arianism; and it seems to have been thought, that, by confining the term to express mere sovereignty, the force of all those passages of Scripture in which Christ is called God, and from which his absolute Divinity is argued, might be avoided.

His words are, "The word Theos, God, has, in Scripture and in all books

of morality and religion, a relative signification, and not, as in metaphysical books, an absolute one: as is evident from the relative terms which, in moral writings, may always be joined with it. For instance: in the same manner as we say my father, my king, and the like; so it is proper also to say my God, the God of Israel, the God of the universe, and the like. Which words are expressive of dominion and government. But, in the metaphysical way, it cannot be said my Infinite Substance, the Infinite

Substance of Israel, or the like."

To this Dr. Waterland's reply is an ample confutation. "I shall only observe here, by the way, that the word star is a relative word, for the same reason with that which the doctor gives for the other. For the star of your God Remphan (Acts 7:43) is a proper expression; but, in the metaphysical way, it cannot be said, the luminous substance of your God Remphan. So again, water is a relative word; for it is proper to say the water

of Israel; but, in the metaphysical way, it cannot he said, the fluid substance of Israel. The expression is improper. (6) By parity of reason, we may make relative words almost as many as we please. But to proceed: I maintain that dominion is not the full import of the word God in Scripture; that it is but a part of the idea, and a small part too; and that if any person be called God, merely on account of dominion, he is called so by way of figure and resemblance only; and is not properly God,

according to the Scripture notion of it. We may call any one a king, who lives free and independent, subject to no man's will. He is a king so far, or in some respects; though, in many other respects, nothing like one; and, therefore, not properly a king. If, by the same figure of speech, by way of allusion and resemblance, anything be called God, because resembling God in one or more particulars, we are not to conclude that it is properly and truly God.

(6) It is very obvious to perceive where the impropriety of such expressions lies. The word substance, according to the common use of language, when used in the singular number, is supposed to be intrinsic to the thing spoken of, whose substance it is; and, indeed, to be the thing itself. My substance is myself; and the substance of Israel is Israel. And hence it evinces to be improper to join substance with the relative terms, understanding it of anything intrinsic.

"To enlarge something farther upon this head, and to illustrate the case by a few instances. Part of the idea which goes along with the word God is, that his habitation is sublime, and his dwelling not with flesh, Dan. 2:11. This part of the idea is applicable to angels or to saints, and therefore they may thus far be reputed gods: and are some-times so styled in Scripture or ecclesiastical writings. Another part of the complex idea of God is giving orders from above, and publishing commands from heaven. This was, in

some sense, applicable to Moses, who is, therefore, called a God unto Pharaoh; not as being properly a God; but instead of God, in that instance, or that resembling circumstance. In the same respect, every prophet or apostle, or even a minister of a parish, might be figuratively called God. Dominion goes along with the idea of God, or is a proof of it; and, therefore, kings, princes, and magistrates, resembling God in that respect, may, by the like figure of speech, be styled gods: not properly; for then we might

as properly say God David, God Solomon, or God Jeroboam, as King David, &c; but by way of allusion, and in regard to some imperfect resemblance which they bear to God in some particular respects; and that is all. It belongs to God to receive worship, and sacrifice, and homage. Now, because the heathen idols so far resembled God as to be made the objects of worship, &c, therefore they also, by the same figure of speech, are by the Scripture denominated gods, though, at the same time, they are declared, in a proper sense,

to be no gods. The belly is called the God of the luxurious, Phil, 3:19, because some are as much devoted to the service of their bellies as others are to the service of God, and because their lusts have got the dominion over them. This way of speaking is, in like manner, grounded on some imperfect resemblance, and is easily understood. The prince of the devils is supposed by most interpreters, to be called the God of this world, 2 Cor. 4:4. If so, the reason may be, either because the men of this

world are entirely devoted to his service; or that he has got the power and dominion over them.

"Thus we see how the word God, according to the popular way of speaking, has been applied to angels, or to men, or to things inanimate and insensible: because some part of the idea belonging to God has been conceived to belong to them also. To argue from hence that any of them is properly God, is making the whole of a part, and reasoning fallaciously, a dicto secundum quid, as

the schools speak, ad dictum sim-pliciier. If we inquire carefully into the Scripture notion of the word, we shall find that neither dominion singly, nor all the other instances of resemblance, make up the idea; or are sufficient to denominate anything properly God. When the prince of Tyre pretended to be God, Ezek. 28:2, he thought of something more than mere dominion to make him so. He thought of strength invincible and power irresistible; and God was pleased to convince him of his folly and vanity,

not by telling him how scanty his dominion was, or how low his office; but how weak, frail, and perishing his nature was; that he was man only, and not God, Ezek. 28:2-9, and should surely find so by the event. When the Lycaonians, upon the sight of a miracle wrought by St. Paul, Acts 14:11, took him and Barnabas for gods, they did not think so much of dominion as of power and ability, beyond human; and when the apostles answered them, they did not tell them that their dominion was only human,

or that their office was not Divine; but that they had not a Divine nature. They were weak, frail, and feeble men; of like infirmities with the rest of their species, and, therefore, no gods.

"If we trace the Scripture notion of what is truly and properly God, we shall find it made up of these several ideas: infinite wisdom, power invincible, all-sufficiency, and the like. These are the ground and foundation of dominion, which is but a secondary notion, a consequence of

the former; and it must be dominion supreme, and none else, which will suit with the Scripture notion of God. It is not that of a governor, a ruler, a protector, a lord, or the like, but a sovereign Ruler, an almighty Protector, an omniscient and omnipresent G6vernor, an eternal, immutable, all-sufficient Creator, Preserver, and Protector. Whatever falls short of this is not properly, in the Scripture notion, God, but is only called so by way of figure, as has before been explained. Now, if you ask

me why the relative terms may properly be applied to the word God, the reason is plain, because there is something relative in the whole idea of God, namely, the notion of governor, protector, &c. If you ask why they cannot so properly be applied to the word God in the metaphysical sense, beside the reason before given, there is another as plain, because metaphysics, taking in only one part of the idea, consider the nature abstracted from the relation, leaving the relative part out."

To these observations may be added the argument of Dr. Randolph. (Vindication of Christ's Divinity.) "If God be a relative term, which has reference to subjects, it follows that when there were no subjects there was no God; and, consequently, either the creatures must have been some of them eternal, or there must have been a time when there was no God." The matter, however, is put beyond all doubt, by the express testimony that it is not dominion only, but excellence of nature and attributes exclusively

Divine which enter into the notion of God. Thus, in Psalm 90,

"Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." Here the idea of eternity is attached to the term, and he is declared to be God "from everlasting" and, consequently, before any creature's existence, and so before he could have any "subjects" or exercise any "dominion."

The import of the title God, in its highest sense, being thus established to include all the excellencies and glories of the Divine nature, on which alone such a dominion as is ascribed to God could be maintained, if that tide be found ascribed to Christ, at any period, in this its highest sense, it will prove, not, as the Arians would have it, his dominion only, but his Divinity; and it is no answer to this at all to say that men are sometimes called gods in the Scripture. In the New Testament the term God, in

the singular, is never applied to any man; and it is even a debated matter, whether it is ever a human appellation, either in the singular or the plural, in the Old Testament, the passages quoted being probably elliptical, or capable of another explanation. (7) But this is not important: if, in its highest sense, it is found used of Christ, it matters not to how many persons it is applied in its lower, or as a merely figurative appellation.

(7) Exodus 7:1: "See I have made thee a God to Pharaoh." This seems to be explained by chapter 4:16: "Thou shalt be to him instead of God."Psalm 72:1: "God standeth in the congregation of the mighty: [Heb. of God:] he judgeth among the gods." This passage is rendered by Parkhurst,

"The Aleim stand in the congregation of God; in the midst the Aleim will judge." And on verse 6, "I have said ye are gods," he supposes an ellipsis of Caph, "I have said ye are as

gods." As this is spoken of judges, who were professedly God's vicegerents, this is a very natural ellipsis, and there appears nothing against it in the argument of our Lord, John 10:34. The term, as used in all these passages, does not so much appear to be used in a lower sense, as by figurative application and ellipsis.

Matthew 1:23: "Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold a

virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." This is a portion of Scripture which the Socinians, in their "Improved Version," have printed in italics, as of

"doubtful authority," though, with the same breath, they allow that it is found "in all the manuscripts and versions which are now extant." The ground, therefore, on which they have rested their objection is

confessedly narrow and doubtful, and frail as it is, it has been entirely taken from them, and the authority of this scripture fully established. (Vide Nare's Remarks on the New Version.) The reason of an attempt, at once so bold and futile, to expunge this passage, and the following part of St. Matthew's history which is connected with it, may be found in the explicitness of the testimony which it bears to our Lord's Divinity, and which no criticism could evade. The prophecy which is quoted

by the evangelist has its difficulties; but they do not in the least affect the argument. Whether we can explain Isaiah or not, that is, whether we can show in what manner the prophecy had a primary accomplishment in the prophet's day or not, St.

Matthew is sufficiently intelligible. He tells us, that the words spoken by the prophet were spoken of Christ; and that his miraculous conception took place, "that," in order that, "they might be fulfilled;" a mode of

expression so strong, that even those who allow the prophets to be quoted sometimes by way of accommodation by the writers of the New Testament, except this instance, as having manifestly, from the terms used, the form of an argument, and not of a mere allusion. (8) Farther, says the sacred historian, "and they shall call his name Emmanuel;" that is, according to the idiom of Scripture, where anything is said to be called what it in reality is, he shall be "Emmanuel," and the

interpretation is added, "God with us."

(8) "Formula citandi qua Evangelista utitur cap. 1, 22, touto de olon gegonen, ina plhrwsn to rhsen manifeste este argumentantis, non comparantis, quoe magnopere diversa est ab alia ejusdem Evangelistae, et aliorum," &c. (Dathe, in Isa. 7:4.) It is indeed objected, that the Divinity of Christ can no more be argued from this title of Emmanuel than the divinity of eli, whose name signifies my God, or of

Elihu, which imports my God himself; but it is to be remarked, that by these names such individuals were commonly and constantly known among those with whom they lived. But Immanuel was not the personal name of our Lord, he was not so called by his friends and countrymen familiarly: the personal name which he received was Jesus, by Divine direction, and by this he was known to the world. It follows, therefore, that Immanuel was a descriptive title, a name of revelation, expressive of his

Divine character. It is clear, also, that in this passage he is called God; and two circumstances, in addition to that just mentioned, prove that the term is used in its full and highest sense. In Isaiah, from which the passage is quoted by the evangelist, the land of Judea is called the land of this Immanuel more than seven centuries before he was born. "And he (the Assyrian) shall pass through Judah; he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach even to the neck, and the stretching out of his wings shall fill

the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel," chap, 8: 8. Thus is Christ, according to the argument in a former chapter, represented as existing before his birth in Judea, and, as the God of the Jews, the proprietor of the land of Israel.

This also gives the true explanation of St. John's words, "He came unto his own, [nation] and his own [people] received him not." The second circumstance which proves the term God, in the title Immanuel, to be used in its highest sense is, that the same person, in

the following chapter of Isaiah, is called "God," with the epithet of "mighty," - "Wonderful, Counselor, the mighty God." Thus, as Bishop Pearson observes, "First he is Ìmmanuel,' that is, with us, for he hath dwelt among us; and when he parted from the earth, he said to his disciples, `1 am with you alway, even to the end of the world.' Secondly, he is el, and that name was given him, as the same prophet testified, `his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the mighty God.' He then who is both properly called el,

that is God, and is also really immanu, that is, with us, must infallibly be that ìmmanuel,' who is `God with us.' No inferior Deity, but invested with the full and complete attributes of absolute Divinity-` the Mighty God.'"

In Luke 1:16, 17, it is said of John Baptist, "And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the lord their God, and he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias." This passage has been already adduced to prove that the title "lord" is used of Christ in the import

of Jehovah. But he is called the lord their God, and, as the term lord is used in its highest sense, so must also the term God, which proves that this title is given to our Savior in its fullest and most extended meaning - "to Jehovah their God," or "to their God Jehovah," for the meaning is the same.

John 1:1: "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the Word was God."

When we come to consider the title "the word," Logos, this passage will be examined more at large.

Here it is adduced to prove that the Logos, by whom all understand Christ, is called God in the highest sense. 1. Because when it is used of the Father, in the preceding clause, it must be used in its full import. 2. Because immediately to call our Lord by the same name as the Father, without any hint of its being used in a lower sense, would have been to mislead the reader on a most important question, if St. John had not regarded him as equal to the Father. 3. Because the creation is ascribed to the "Word,"

who is called God. "All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made." By this the absolute Divinity of Christ is infallibly determined, unless we should run into the absurdity of supposing it possible for a creature to create, and not only to create all other created things, but himself also. For, if Christ be not God, he is a creature; and if "not anything that was made," was made "without him," then he made himself.

This decided passage, as may be supposed, has been subjected to much critical scrutiny by the enemies of the faith, and many attempts have been made to resist its force. It is objected, that the Father is called Ho Theos, and the "Word" simply Theos, without the article. To which Dr. Middleton replies: (Doctrine of the Greek Article.)

"Certain critics, as is well known, have inferred from the absence of the article in this place, that theos is here used in a subordinate

sense; it has, however, been so satisfactorily answered that in whatever acceptation Theos is to be taken, it properly rejects the article, being here the predicate of the proposition; and Bengel instances the LXX, 1 Kings 18:24, stos theos, as similar to the present passage. It may be added, that if we had read ho theos, the proposition would have assumed the convertible form, and the meaning would have been, that whatever may be affirmed or denied of God the Father, may also be

affirmed or denied of the Logos, a position which would accord as little with the trinitarian as with the Socinian hypotheses. It is, therefore, unreasonable to infer, that the word Theos is here used in a lower sense; for the writer could not have written HoTheos without manifest absurdity."

In many passages too, in which, without dispute, Theos is meant of the Supreme Being, the article is not used. Matthew 19:26, "With men this is impossible, but with God

(Theo) all things are possible." Luke 16:13, "Ye cannot serve (Theo) and mammon." John 1:18, "No man hath seen God (Theon) at any time." John 9:33, "If this man were not of God (Theou) he could do nothing." John 16:30. "By this we believe that thou camest from God," (Theou.) Many other instances might be given, but these amply reply to the objection.

To evade the force of the argument drawn from the creation being ascribed to the Word, a circumstance

which fixes his title "God" in its highest possible sense, it is alleged, that the word ginomai never signifies to create, and the Socinian version, therefore, renders the text, "All things were done by.him," and the translators inform us, in a note,' this means, that "all things in the Christian dispensation were done by Christ, that is, by his authority." But what shall we say to this bold assertion, that ginomai is never used with reference to creative acts in the New Testament, when the following passages may be

adduced in refutation? Heb. 4:3, "Although the works were finished from the foundation of the world." Heb. 11:3, "So that things which are seen were not made of things that do appear." James 3:9, "Men which are made after the similitude of God." In all these passages, and in some places of the Septuagint also, that very word is used which, they tell us, never expresses, in Scripture, the notion of creation. Even the same chapter, verse 10, gives an instance of the same use of the word. "He was in the

world, and the world was made (egeneto) by him." For this, of course, they have a criticism; but the manner in which this passage, so directly in refutation of their assertion, is disposed of in their "Improved Version," is a striking confirmation of the entire impossibility of accommodating Scripture to their system.

"The world was made by him," says the evangelist. "The world was enlightened by him," say the Socinian translators, without the slightest

authority, and m entire contradiction to the scope of the passage. Why did they not render the word as in the preceding verse, "The world was done by him?" which, in point of fact, makes no difference in the sense, when rightly considered. The doing, ascribed to the Eternal Word, is of a specific character, - doing in the sense of framing, making, or creating (panta) "all things."

The Socinians have not, however, fully satisfied

themselves with this notable criticism in their "Improved Version;" and some of them, therefore, render "all things were made by him," "all things were made for him." But these criticisms cannot stand together. If the verb ginomai is to be deprived of the import of creation, then it is impossible to retain the rendering of "all things were made for him," since his own acts of ordering the Christian dispensation and "enlightening"

the world could not be "for him," but must have been done "by him." If, on the contrary, they will have it that all things were done for him, then ginomai must be allowed to import creation, or their production by the omnipotence of God. Both criticisms they cannot hold, and thus they confess that one destroys the other. Their rendering of di autou cannot, however, be supported; for dia, with a genitive, denotes not the final, but the efficient cause. (9) The introduction to St.

John's Gospel may, therefore, be considered as an inexpugnable proof that Deity, in its highest, and in no secondary or subordinate sense is ascribed to our Savior, under his title God - "and the Word was God." Nor in any other than the highest sense of the term God can the confession of Thomas, John 20:28, be understood. "And Thomas answered and said unto him, my lord and my God." The Socinian version, in its note on this passage, intimates that it may be considered not as a

confession, but as an exclamation, "My Lord! and my God!" thereby choosing to put profane, or, at least, vulgar language into the mouth of this apostle, of which degradation we have certainly no example in the narration of the evangelists. Michaelis has justly observed, that if Thomas had spoken German, (he might have added English, French, or Italian,) it might have been contended with some plausibility, that "My Lord and my God" was only an irreverent ejaculation; but

that Jewish astonishment was thus expressed is wholly without proof or support.

Add to this, that the words are introduced with eipen autw, said to him, that is, to Christ; a mere ejaculation, such as that here supposed, is rather an appeal to Heaven. Our Savior's reply makes it absolutely certain, that the words of Thomas, though they are in the form of an exclamation, amount to a confession of faith, and were equivalent to a direct

assertion of our Savior's Divinity.

Christ commends Thomas's acknowledgment, while he condemns the tardiness with which it is made; but to what did this acknowledgment amount? That Christ was lord and God. (Middleton.) (9) So dia is used throughout St. John's Gospel; and in Heb. 2:10, it is said of the Father, di ou ta panta, "by whom are all things." So also Rom. 9:36, "Of him, and through him, (di

anton,) and to him are all things."

In Titus 2:13, "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ," our Lord is not only called God, but the great God, which marks the sense in which the term is used by the apostle, and gives unequivocal evidence of his opinions on the subject of Christ's Divinity. Socinian and Arian interpreters tell us, that "the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ" are two persons, and therefore

refer the title "great God" to the Father.

The Socinian version accordingly renders the text, "the glorious appearance of the great God and of our Savior Jesus Christ." To this interpretation there are satisfactory answers. Dr. Whitby observes:-

"Here it deserveth to be noted, that it is highly probable, that Jesus Christ is styled the great God, 1. Because, in the original, the article is prefixed only before the great God, and therefore, seems to require

this construction, the appearance of Jesus Christ, the great God and our Savior. 2.

Because, as God the Father is not said properly to appear, so the word epifaneia never occurs in the New Testament, but when it is applied to Jesus Christ and to some coming of his; the places in which it is to be found being only these, 2 Thess. 2:8; 1 Tim. 6:14; 2 Tim. 1:10, and 4:1, 6. 3.

Because Christ is emphatically styled 'our hope,' 'the hope of glory:'

Col. 1:23; 1 Tim. 1:1. And lastly, because not only all the ancient commentators on the place do so interpret this text, but the anti-Nicene fathers also; Hyppolitus, speaking of the appearance of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ; and Clemens of Alexandria, proving Christ to be both God and man, our Creator, and the Author of all our good things, from these very words of St. Paul." (Exposition.) Independent of the criticism which rests upon the absence of the article, it is sufficient to establish the claim of our

Savior to the title of "the great God" in this passage, that epipsaneia,

"the appearing," is never, in the New Testament, spoken of the Father, but of the Son only; but, since the time of this critic, the doctrine of the Greek article has undergone ample and acute investigation, and has placed new guards around this and some other passages of similar construction against the perversions of heresy. It has, by these investigations, been

established, that the Greek idiom forbids Theou and sothros to be understood except of the same person; and Mr. Granville Sharp, therefore, translates the text, "expecting the blessed hope and appearance of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ:" epipsaneian ths doxhs tou magaloi Thsonkai sothros hman Ihsou Christos.

This interpretation depends upon the rule or canon brought forward into notice not many years ago by Mr. Granville Sharp. It excited a controversy, and

Unitarians either treated it with ridicule, or denied its applicability to the New Testament. But after it had been shown by Mr.

Wordsworth, that most of the texts to which the rule applies were understood in the way Mr.

Sharp explained them by the ancient fathers, who must surely have known the idiom of their native tongue; and after the doctrine of the Greek article had been investigated with so much penetration and learning by Dr. Middleton, all who

have paid attention to the subject have acquiesced in the canon." (Holders Testimonies.)

This important canon of criticism is thus stated by Dr. Middleton:-

"When two or more attributes, joined by a copulative or copulatives, are assumed of the same person or thing, before the first attributive the article is inserted, before the remaining ones it is omitted." The limitations of this rule may be seen in the learned author's work itself, with the reasons on

which they rest. They are found in "names of substances, considered as substances, proper names, or names of abstract ideas;" and with such exceptions, and that of plurals occasionally, the rule uniformly holds. (1)

Another passage in which the appellation God is given to Christ, in a connection which necessarily obliges us to understand it in its highest sense, is Heb. 1:8: "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." The argument of

the apostle here determines the sense in which he calls Jesus, the Son, "God," and the views he entertains of his nature. Angels and men are the only rational created beings in the universe which are mentioned by the sacred writers. The apostle argues that Christ is superior even to angels; that they are but ministers, he a sovereign, seated on a throne; that they worship him, and that he receives their worship; that they are creatures, but he creator. "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the

foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands;" and full of these ideas of supreme Divinity, he applies a passage to him out of the 45th Psalm, which is there addressed to the Messiah, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever."

(1) See Middleton on the Greek article; also, remarks at the close of the Epistle to the Ephesians and the Epistle to Titus, in Dr. A. Clarke's Commentary; Wordworth's Letters to

Sharp; Dr. P. Smith's Person of Christ.

The Socinian version renders the passage, "But to the Son he saith, God is thy throne for ever and ever," and in this it follows Wakefield and some others.

The first reason given to support this rendering is, that ho theos is the nominative case. But the nominative, both in common and in Attic Greek, is often used for the vocative. It is so used frequently by the LXX, and by the writers of the New

Testament. The vocative form, indeed, very rarely occurs in either, the nominative almost exclusively supplying its place; and in this passage it was so taken by the Greek fathers. (2) The criticism is, therefore, groundless.

(2) "Omnes (Patres) uno consensu ho theos hoc in loco vocative acceperunt, prout in Psalmis frequente a LXX usurpatur, et alioqui familiare est Graecis, Atticis praesertim, nominandi casum vocative sumere." (Bishop Bull.)

The second is, that as the words are addressed to Solomon in the psalm from which they are quoted, they must be understood to declare, that God was the support of his throne. But the opinion that the psalm was composed concerning Solomon's marriage with Pharaoh's daughter, (3) has no foundation, either in Scripture or in antiquity, and is, indeed, contradicted by both. On this subject Bishop Horsley remarks:-

(3) This notion appears to have originated with Calvin.

"The circumstances which are characteristic of the king, who is the hero of this poem, are every one of them utterly inapplicable to Solomon; insomuch, that not one of them can be ascribed to him, without contradicting the history of his reign. The hero of this poem is a warrior, who girds his sword upon his thigh; rides in pursuit of flying foes; makes havoc among them with his sharp arrows; and reigns, at last,

by conquest, over his vanquished enemies. Now, Solomon was no warrior; he enjoyed a long reign of forty years of uninterrupted peace.

"Another circumstance of distinction in the great personage celebrated by this psalm is his love of righteousness and hatred of wickedness. The original expresses, that he had set his heart upon righteousness, and bore an antipathy to wickedness. His love of righteousness and hatred of wickedness had been so much the

ruling principles of his whole conduct, that, for this, he was advanced to a condition of the highest bliss, and endless perpetuity was promised to his kingdom. The word we render 'righteousness,' in its strict and proper meaning, signifies 'justice,'

or the constant and perpetual observance of the natural distinctions of right and wrong in civil society; and principally with respect to property in private persons, and, in a magistrate or sovereign, in the impartial exercise of

judicial authority. But the word we render 'wickedness,'

denotes not only ' injustice,' but whatever is contrary to moral purity in the indulgence of the appetites of the individual, and whatever is contrary to a principle of true piety toward God.

Now, the word ' righteousness5 being here opposed to this wickedness, must, certainly be taken as generally as the word to which it is opposed in a contrary signification. It must signify, therefore,

not merely ' justice,' in the sense we have explained, but purity of private manners, and piety toward God. Now, Solomon was certainly, upon the whole, a good king, nor was he without piety; but his love of righteousness, in the large sense in which we have shown the word is to be taken, and his antipathy to the contrary, fell very far short of what the psalmist ascribes to his great king, and procured for him no such stability of his monarchy.

"Another circumstance wholly inapplicable to Solomon, is the numerous progeny of sons, the issue of the marriage, all of whom were to be made princes over all the earth. Solomon had but one son, that we read of, that ever came to be a king-his son and successor, Rehoboam; and so far was he from being a prince over all the earth, that he was no sooner seated on the throne than he lost the greater part of his father's kingdom.

"For, would it be said of him that his kingdom, which lasted only forty years, is eternal? It was not even eternal in his posterity. And, with respect to his loving righteousness and hating wickedness, it but ill applies to one who in his old age became an encourager of idolatry, through the influence of women. This psalm, therefore, is applicable only to the Christ. Farther, Solomon's marriage with Pharaohs daughter being expressly condemned as contrary to the law, 1

Kings 11:2, to suppose that this psalm was composed in honor of that event, is, certainly, an ill-founded imagination. Estius informs us, that the rabbins, in their commentaries, affirm, that Psalm 45 was written wholly concerning the Messiah. Accordingly, they translate the title of the psalm as we do, a Song of Loves; the LXX, odh uper ts agaphts, a song concerning the beloved; Vulgate, pro dilecto: a title justly given to Messiah, whom God, by voices from heaven, declared his

beloved Son. Beside, as the word Meschil, which signifies for instruction, (LXX, eix sunesin, Vulgate, ad intellectum,) is inserted in the title, and as no mention is made in the psalm of Solomon, from an account of whose loves, as Pierce observes, the Jewish Church was not likely to gain much instruction, we are led to understand the psalm, not of Solomon, but of Messiah only."

The interpretation "God is thy throne," is, moreover, monstrous, and derives no support from any parallel

figurative, or elliptical mode of expression in the sacred writings-God, the throne of a creature! And, finally, as stated by Middleton, had that been the sense of the passage, the language requires that it should have been written, Dronos sou ho Theos, not ho Thonos, (Doctrine of the Greek Article,) which, on the Sociniari interpretation, is the predicate of the proposition. So futile are all these attempts to shake the evidence which this text gives to the absolute God-head of our Savior.

"And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life," 1 John 5:20. Here our Savior is called the true God and eternal life. The means by which this testimony is evaded, is to interpret the clause, "him that is true," of the Father, and to refer the pronoun this, not to the nearest antecedent, "his Son Jesus Christ," but to the most remote, "him that is true." All, however, that

is pretended by the Socinian critics on this passage is, not that this construction must, but that it may take, place. Yet even this feeble opposition to the received rendering cannot be maintained: for, 1. To interpret the clause, "him that is true," of the Father, is entirely arbitrary; and the scope of the epistle, which was to prove that Jesus the Christ was the true Son of God, and, therefore, Divine, against those who denied his Divinity, and that "he had come in the flesh," in opposition to the heretics

who denied his humanity, (4) obliges us to refer that phrase to the Son, and not to the Father. 2. If it could be established that the Father was intended by "him that is true," it would be contrary to grammatical usage to refer the pronoun this, is the "true God and eternal life," to the remote antecedent, without obvious and indisputable necessity.

(4) These were the docetae, who taught that our Lord was a man in appearance only, and suffered and died in appearance only. On the

contrary, the Cerinthians, and others believed that the Son of God was united to the human nature at his baptism, departed from it before his passion, and was reunited to it after his resurrection. According to the former, Christ was man in appearance only; according to the latter, he was the Son of God at the time of his passion and death in appearance only. We see, then, the reason why St. John, who writes against these errors, so often calls Christ, "him that is true," true God and true

man, not either in appearance only.

"Whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever," Rom. 9:5.

With respect to this text, it is to be noted,-

1. That it continues an enumeration of the particular privileges of the Jewish nation which are mentioned in the preceding verses, and the apostle adds, "whose are the fathers," the patriarchs,

and prophets, and of whom "the Christ came."

2. That he throws in a clause of limitation with respect to the coming of Christ, "according to the flesh" which clearly states that it was only according to the flesh, the humanity of Christ, that he descended from the Jewish nation, and, at the same time, intimates, that he was more than flesh, or mere human nature.

3. The sentence does not end here: the apostle adds, "who is, over all, God blessed forever;" a relative

expression which evidently refers to the antecedent Christ; and thus we have an antithesis, which shows the reason why the apostle introduced the limiting clause, "according to the flesh;" and explains why Christ, in one respect, did descend from the Jews; and in another, that this could not be affirmed of him: he was "God over all," and, therefore, only "according to the flesh" could he be of human descent.

4. That this completes the apostle's purpose to

magnify the privileges of his nation: after enumerating many others, he crowns the whole by declaring, that "God over all," when he became incarnate for the sake of human salvation, took a body of the seed of Abraham.

Criticism has, of course, endeavored, if possible, to weaken the argument drawn from this lofty and impregnable passage; but it is of such a kind as greatly to confirm the truth. For, in the first place, various readings of manuscripts

cannot here be resorted to for rendering the sense dubious, and all the ancient versions support the present reading. It has, indeed, been alleged, on the authority of Grasinus, that though the word "God" is found in all our present copies, it was wanting in those of Cyprian, Hilary, and Chrysostom. But this has been abundantly proved to be an error, that word being found in the manuscripts and beet editions of Cyprian and Hilary, and even St. Chrysostom affords decisive testimony to the

common reading; in short, "the word God, in this text is found in every known manuscript of this epistle, in every ancient version extant, and in every father who has had occasion to quote the passage; so that, in truth, there can scarcely be instanced a text in the New Testament in which all the ancient authorities more satisfactorily agree." (Magee on Atonement. See also Nares on the New Version.) The only method of dealing with this passage left to Arians and Socinians was, therefore, to attempt to obtain a different sense

from it by shifting the punctuation. By this device some read, "and of whom is the Christ, according to the flesh. God, who is over all, be blessed forever." Others, "and of whom is the Christ, according to the flesh, who is over all. Blessed be God forever." A critic of their own, Mr. Wakefield, whose authority they acknowledge to be very great, may, however, here be turned against them. Both these constructions, he acknowledges, appear so awkward, so abrupt, so incoherent, that he never

could be brought to relish them in the least degree; (Inquiry into Opinions, &c;) and Dr. S. Clarke who was well disposed to evade this decisive passage, acknowledges that the common reading is the most obvious. But independent of the authority of critics, there are several direct and fata l objections to this altered punctuation.

It leaves the limiting clause, "according to the flesh," wholly unaccounted for; for no possible reason can be given for that

limitation on the Socinian scheme. If the apostle had regarded Christ simply as a man, he could have come in no other way than "according to the flesh;" nor is this relieved at all by rendering the phrase, as in their "Improved Version," by "natural descent," for a mere man could only appear among men by "natural descent." Either, therefore, the clause is a totally unmeaning and an impertinent parenthesis, or it has respect to the natural antithesis which follows- his supreme Divinity, as "God over all." Thus the

scope of the passage prohibits this license of punctuation. To the latter clause being considered as a doxology to God the Father, there is an insuperable, critical difficulty. Dr. Middleton observes:-

"It has been deemed a safer expedient to attempt a construction different from the received one, by making the whole or part of the clause to be merely a doxology in praise of the Father, so that the rendering will be either 'God, who is over all, be

blessed forever,' or, beginning at Theos, God be blessed forever.' These interpretations also have their difficulties; for thus euloghtos will properly want the article. On the first, however, of these constructions, it is to be observed, that in all the doxologies both of the LXX and of the New Testament, in which euloghtos is used, it is placed at the beginning of the sentence: in the New Testament there are five instances, all conspiring to prove this usage, and in the LXX about forty. The same arrangement is observed in

the formula of cursing, in which epichatxatos always precedes the mention of the person cursed.

The reading then would, on this construction, rather have been, euloghtos ho on epi panton Theos eis txs aionas. Against the other supposed doxology, the objection is still stronger, since that would require us not only to transpose euloghtos, but to read Ho theos. Accordingly, in all instances, where a doxology is meant, we find euloghtos Ho Theos."

(Doctrine of Greek Article.) Whitby also remarks:-

"The words will not admit of that interpunction and interpretation of Erasmus, which will do any service to the Arians or Socinians, namely, that a colon must be put after the words chatasarcha, after the flesh; and the words following must be an ecphonema, and grateful exclamation for the blessings conferred upon the Jews: thus, God, who is over all, be blessed forever. For this exposition is so harsh, and without any like example in the

whole New Testament, that as none of the orthodox ever thought upon it, so I find not that it ever came into the head of any Arian.

Socinus himself rejects it for this very good reason, that Theos euloghtos, God be blessed, is an unusual and unnatural construction: for, wherever else these words signify blessed be God, euloghtos is put before God, as Luke 1:68; 2 Cor. 1:3; Eph. 1:3; 1 Peter 1:3; and Theos hath an article prefixed to it; nor are they ever immediately joined together otherwise.

The phrase occurs twenty times in the Old Testament, but in every place euloghtos goes before, and the article is annexed to the word God, which is a demonstration that this is a perversion of the sense of the apostle's words."

The critical discussion of this text is farther pursued by the writers just quoted; by Dr. Nares, in his Remarks; Mr. Wardlaw, in his Discourses; Archbishop Magee, and others; and we may confidently say of it, with Doddridge, that it is "a

memorable text, and contains a proof of Christ's proper Deity, which the opposers of that doctrine have never been able, nor will ever be able to answer." So it was considered and quoted "by the fathers," says Whitby, "from the beginning; and," continues the same commentator, "if these words are spoken by the Spirit of God concerning Christ, the arguments hence to prove him truly and properly God are invincible; for, first, Ho Theos epi panton, God over all, is the periphrasis by

which all the heathen philosophers did usually represent the supreme God; and so is God the Father described both in the Old and New Testament, as Ho Theos epi panton, he that is over all, Eph. 4:6. Secondly, This is the constant epithet and periphrasis of the great God in the Old Testament, that he is euloghtos eis ton aiona, God blessed for evermore, 1 Chron. 16:36; Psalm 91:13, and 89:52; and also in the New, where he is styled the God ho estin euloghtos eis tas

aionas, who is blessed for evermore."

Numerous other passages might be cited, where Christ is called "GOD:" these only have been selected, not merely because the proof does not rest upon the number of Scriptural testimonies, but upon their explicitness; but also because they all associate the term God, as applied to our Savior, with other titles, or with circumstances, which demonstrate most fully, that that term was used by the inspired penmen in its

highest sense of true and proper Deity when they applied it to Christ. Thus we have seen it associated with Jehovah; with Lord, the New Testament rendering of that ineffable name; with acts of creative energy, as in the introduction to the Gospel of St.

John; with the supreme dominion and perpetual stability of the throne of the Son, in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews. In the Epistle to Titus, he is called "the great God;" in 1

John, "the true God," and the giver of "eternal LIFE;" and in the last text examined, his twofold nature is distinguished-man, "according to the flesh," and in his higher nature, God, "God over all, blessed for evermore." These passages stand in full refutation of both the Arian and Socinian heresies. In opposition to the latter, they prove our Savior to be more than man, for they assert him to be God; and in opposition to the latter, they prove that he is God, not in an inferior sense, but "the

great God," "the true God," and "God over all, blessed for evermore."

I pass over, for the sake of greater brevity, other titles more rarely ascribed to our Savior, such as, the "lord of glory," 1 Cor. 2:8; "king of kings and lord of lords," on which it would be easy to argue, that their import falls nothing short of absolute Divinity. A few remarks on three other titles of our Lord, of more frequent occurrence, may close this branch of the argument. These are, "king of ISRAEL;" "Son of God;"

and "the word." The first bears evident allusion to the pre-existence of Christ, and to his sovereignty over Israel under the law. Now, it has been already established, that the Jehovah, "the King of the Jews," "the Holy One of Israel our King,"

"the King, the Lord of Hosts," of the Old Testament, is not the Father; but another Divine Person, who, in the New Testament, is affirmed to have been Jesus Christ. This being the view of the sacred writers of the

evangelical dispensation, it is clear that they could not use the appellation "the king of Israel" in a lower sense than that in which it stands in the Old Testament; and there, indisputably, even by the confession of opponents, it is collocated with titles, and attributes, and works which unequivocally mark a Divine character. It is with clear reference to this his peculiar property in the Jewish people that St. John says, "He came unto his own, and his own received him not; a declaration which is scarcely sense, if

Judea was in no higher a meaning his own country (5) than it was the country of any other person who happened to be born there; for it is, surely, a strange method of expressing the simple fact that he was born a Jew, (were nothing more intended,) to say that he came into his own country, for this every person does at his birth, wherever he is born. Nor is it any aggravation of the guilt of the Jews, that they rejected merely a countryman, since that circumstance gave him no greater claim than that of

any other Jew to be received as the Messiah. The force of the remark lies in this, that whereas the prophets had declared that "the King of Israel," "the Lord of hosts," - "Jehovah," should become incarnate, and visit his own people; and that Jesus had given sufficient evidence that he was that predicted and expected personage; yet the Jews, "his own people" and inheritance, rejected him.

The same notion is conveyed in our Lord's parable, when the Jews are made to say "this is the

heir," he in whom the right is vested: "let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours." (6) (5) "He came into his own country, and his countrymen received him not." (Capp's Version.) (6) Venit ad sua, et sui non receperunt eum, id est, venit ad possessionem suam, et qui possessionis ipsius erant, eum non receperunt: quod explicatur, Matt, 21, ubi films dicitur missus ad ecclesiam Judaicam os chronomos eis thn klhronrmian aurs. (Ludov. de Dieu, in loc.) It is sufficient, however, here to

show, that the title "king of Israel" was understood, by the Jews, to imply Divinity. Nathaniel exclaims, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the king of Israel.' This was said upon such a proof of his Messiahship as, from his acquaintance with some matter private to Nathaniel alone when he was "under the fig tree," was a full demonstration of omniscience: a circumstance which also determines the Divine import of "Son of God," the title which is here connected with it. Both

were certainly under-stood by Nathaniel to imply an assumption of Godhead.

"'As our Savior hung upon the cross,' says St. Matthew, ' they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads and saying, Thou that destroyest the temple and buildest it in three days, save thyself; if thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others; himself he cannot save.

If he be the king of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the son or God.

The thieves also which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth. [One of them saying, If thou be christ, save thyself and us; but the other said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me, when thou comest into thy 'kingdom.] [And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to

him, and offering him vinegar, and saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself.] Now when the centurion, and they that were with him watching Jesus, saw the earth quake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, [Certainly this was a righteous man,] truly this was the Son of God.' Here we see the Jews, and the Gentiles residents among them, uniting to speak in a language that stamps Divinity upon the title used by them both. The Jewish passengers upon the road

over the top of Calvary, stood still near the cross of our Savior, insultingly to nod at him, to reproach him with his assumed appellative of the Son of God, and to challenge him to an exertion of that Divinity which both he and they affixed to it, by coming down from the cross, and saving himself from death. The elders, the scribes, and the chief priests, equally insulted him with the same assumption, and equally challenged him to the same exertion, calling upon him now to show he was truly

the king of Israel, or the Lord and Sovereign of their nation in all ages, by putting forth the power of his Divine royalty, and coming down from the cross." (Whitaker's Origin of Arianism.)

Such is the testimony of the Jews to the sense in which our Savior applied these titles to himself.

The title "Son of God" demands, however, a larger consideration, various attempts having been made to restrain its significance, in direct opposition to this testimony, to the mere

humanity of our Savior, and to rest its application upon his miraculous conception.

It is true, that this notion is held by some who hesitate not to acknowledge, that Jesus Christ is a Divine person; but, by denying his Deity as "the Son of God," they both depart from the faith of the Church of Christ in the earliest times, and give up to the Socinians the whole argument for the Divinity of Christ which is founded upon that eminent appellation. On this

account, so frequent and indeed so general a title of our Lord deserves to be more particularly considered, that the foundation which it lays for the demonstration of the Divinity of Christ may not be unthinkingly relinquished; and that a door of error, which has been unconsciously opened by the vague reasonings of men, in other respects orthodox, may be closed by the authority of Holy Writ.

That the title, "Son of God," was applied to Christ is a fact. His disciples,

occasionally before and frequently after his resurrection, give him this appellation; he assumes it himself; and it was indignantly denied to him by the Jews, who, by that very denial, acknowledge that it was claimed in its highest sense by him, and by his disciples for him.

The question therefore is, what this title imported.

Those who think that it was assumed by Christ, and given to him by his disciples, because of his miraculous conception, are obviously in error. Our

Lord, when he adopts the appellation, never urges his miraculous birth as a proof of his Sonship; on the contrary, this is a subject on which he preserves a total silence, and the Jews were left to consider him as "the son of Joseph;" and to argue from his being born at "Nazareth," as they supposed, that he could not be the Messiah: so ignorant were they of the circumstances of his birth, and, therefore, of the manner of his conception.

Again, our Lord calls God his Father, and grounds the

proof of it upon his miracles. The Jews, too, clearly conceived, that, in making this profession of Sonship with reference to God, he assumed a Divine character, and made himself "equal with God." They therefore took up stones to stone him. In that important argument between our Lord and the Jews, in which his great object was to establish the point, that, in a peculiar sense, God was his Father, there is no reference at all to the miraculous conception. On the contrary, the title "Son of

God," is assumed by Christ on a ground totally different; and it is disputed by the Jews, not by their questioning or denying the fact, that he was miraculously conceived, but on the assumed impossibility, that he, being a man, should be equal to God which they affirmed that title to import.

Nor did the disciples themselves give him this title with reference to his conception by the Holy Ghost. Certain it is, that Nathaniel did not know the

circumstances of his birth; for he was announced to him by Philip as Jesus of Nazareth, "the son of Joseph;" and he asks, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" He did not know, therefore, but that Jesus was the son of Joseph; he knew nothing of his being born at Bethlehem, and yet he confesses him to be "the Son of God, and the king of Israel."

It may also be observed, that, in the celebrated confession of Peter, "Thou art the Christ, the son of

the living God," there is no reference at all to the miraculous conception; a fact at that time, probably, not known even to the apostles, and one of the things which Mary kept and pondered in her heart, till the Spirit was given, and the full revelation of Christ was made to the apostles.

But, even if the miraculous conception were known to St. Peter, it is clear, from the answer of our Lord to him, that it formed no part of the ground on which he confessed "the son of man"

to be the "son of GOD;" for our Lord replies, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my father which is in heaven." He had been specially taught this doctrine of the Sonship of Christ by God, an unnecessary thing, certainly, if the miraculous conception had been the only ground of that Sonship; for the evidence of that fact might have been collected from Christ and the Virgin Mother, and there was no apparent necessity of a revelation

from the Father so particular, a teaching so special, as that mentioned in our Lord's reply, and which is given as an instance of the peculiar "blessedness" of Simon Barjona.

This ground, therefore, not being tenable, it has been urged, that "SON of God" was simply an appellation of Messiah, and was so used among the Jews; in other words, that it is an official designation, and not a personal one. Against this, however, the evangelic history affords decisive

proof. That the Messiah was to be the Jehovah of the Old Testament is plain from the texts adduced in a former chapter, and this, therefore, is to be considered the faith of the ancient Jewish Church. It is however certain, that, at the period of our Lord's advent, and for many years previously, the learned among the Jews had mingled much of the philosophy which they had learned from the heathen schools with their theological speculation; and that their writings present often a singular

compound of crude metaphysical notions, allegories, cabalistic mysteries, and, occasionally, great and sublime truths. The age of our Lord was an age of great religious corruption and error. The Sadducees were materialists and skeptics; and the Pharisees had long cultivated the opinion, that the Messiah was to be a temporal monarch, a notion which served to vitiate their conceptions of his character and office, and to darken all the prophecies.

Two things, however, amidst all this confusion of opinions, and this prevalence of great errors, appear exceedingly clear from the evangelists:- 1. That the Jews recognized the existence of such a being as the "Son of God;" and that, for any person to profess to be the Son of God, in this peculiar sense, was to commit blasphemy. 2. That for a person to profess to be the Messiah simply was not considered blasphemy, and did not exasperate the Jews to take up stones to stone the offender. Our Lord

certainly professed to be the Messiah; many of the Jews also, at different times, believed on him as such; and yet, as appears from St. John's Gospel, these same Jews, who

"believed" on him as Messiah, were not only "offended," but took up stones to stone him as a blasphemer when he declared himself to be the "Son of God," and that God was his "proper Father." It follows from these facts, that the Jews of our Lord's times, generally, having been perverted from the

faith of their ancestors, did not expect the second person of the trinity, "the Son of God," the Divine Memra, or Logos, to be the Messiah. Others, indeed, had a dim and uninfluential apprehension of this truth; there were who indulged various other speculations on the subject; but the true doctrine was only retained among the faithful few, as Simeon, who explicitly ascribes Divinity to the Messiah, whom he held in his arms; Nathaniel, who connects

"Son of God and king of Israel" together, one the designation of the Divine nature, the other of the office of Messiah; and the apostles of our Lord, whose minds were gradually opened to this mystery of faith, and brought off from the vulgar notion of the civil character and mere human nature and human work of Messiah, by the inspiration and teaching of God - "flesh and blood did not reveal it to them, but the Father."

We cannot, therefore, account for the use of the

title "Son of God," among the Jews of our Lord's time, whether by his disciples or his enemies, by considering it as synonymous with "Messiah."

The Jews regarded the former as necessarily involving a claim to Divinity, but not the latter; and the disciples did not conceive that they fully confessed their Master, by calling him the Messiah, without adding to it his higher personal designation. "Thou art the Christ," says St. Peter; but

he adds, "the son of the living GOD:" just as Nathaniel, under the influence of a recent proof of his omniscience, and, consequently, of his Divinity, salutes him, first, as "Son of God," and, then, as Messiah, "king of Israel."

We are to seek for the origin of the title, "the Son of God," in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, where a divine son is spoken of, in passages, some of which have reference to him as Messiah also, and in others

which have no such reference. In both, however, we shall find that it was a personal designation; a name of revelation, not of office: that it was essential in him to be a son, and accidental only that he was the messiah; that he was the first by nature, the second by appointment; and that, in constant association with the name of "son," as given to him alone, and in a sense which shuts out all creatures, however exalted, are found ideas and circumstances of full and absolute Divinity.

Under the designation "son," Son of God, he is introduced in the second Psalm: "The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." From apostolic authority we know, that the "son," here introduced as speaking, is Christ; this application to him being explicitly made at least twice in the New Testament. Now, if we should allow, with some, that

"the day" here spoken of is the day of Christ's

resurrection, and should interpret his being

"begotten" of the Father of the act itself of raising him from the dead, it is clear, that the miraculous conception of Christ is not, in this passage, laid down as the ground of his Sonship.

The reference is clearly made to another transaction, namely, his resurrection. So far this passage, thus interpreted, furnishes an instance in which the Messiah is called "the Son of God,"

on some ground entirely independent of the mode of his incarnation. But he is so frequently called the Son, where there is no reference even to his resurrection, that this cannot be considered as the ground of that relation; and, indeed, the point is sufficiently settled by St. Paul, who, in his Epistle to the Romans, tells us, that the resurrection of Christ was the declaration of his Sonship, not the ground of it - "declared to be the Son of God with power, by the resurrection from the dead." We perceive, too,

from the Psalm, that the mind of the inspired writer is filled with ideas of his Divinity, of his claims, and of his works as God. This son the nations of the earth are called to "kiss, lest he be angry, and they perish from the way;" and every one is pronounced blessed who "putteth his trust in him;" a declaration of unequivocal Divinity, because found in a book which pronounces every man cursed "who trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm."

"It is obvious, at first view, that the high titles and honors ascribed in this Psalm to the extraordinary person who is the chief subject of it, far transcend anything that is ascribed in Scripture to any mere creature: but if the Psalm be inquired into more narrowly, and compared with parallel prophecies; if it be duly considered, that not only is the extraordinary person here spoken of called the Son of God, but that title is so ascribed to him as to imply, that it belongs to him in a manner that is absolutely

singular, and peculiar to himself, seeing he is said to be begotten of God, (verse 12,) and is called by way of eminence, the Son; (verse 12;) that the danger of provoking him to anger is spoken of in so very different a manner from what the Scripture uses in speaking of the anger of any mere creature; 'Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little;' that when the kings and judges of the earth are commanded to serve God with fear, they are, at the same time,

commanded to kiss the Son, which, in those times and places, was frequently an expression of adoration; and particularly that whereas other scriptures contain awful and just threatenings against those who trust in any mere man, the psalmist expressly calls them blessed who trust in the Son here spoken of: all these things, taken together and compared with the other prophecies, make up a character of Divinity; as, on the other hand, when it is said that God would set this his Son as his king on his holy hill

of Zion, (verse 6,) these and various other expressions in this Psalm contain characters of the subordination which was to be appropriated to that Divine person who was to be incarnate." (Maclaurin's Essay on the Prophecies.)

Neither the miraculous conception of Christ, nor yet his resurrection from the dead, is, therefore, the foundation of his being called the Son of God in this Psalm. Not the first, for there is no allusion to it; not the second, for he was declared from heaven

to be the "beloved Son" of the Father at his very entrance upon his ministry, and, consequently, before the resurrection; and also, because the very apostle who applies the prediction to the resurrection of Christ, explicitly states, that even that was a declaration of an antecedent Sonship. It is also to be noted, that, in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, St. Paul institutes an argument upon this very passage in the second Psalm, to prove the superiority of Christ to the

angels. "For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee?" "The force of this argument lies in the expression 'begotten,' importing that the person addressed is the Son of God, not by creation, but by generation. Christ's preeminence over the angels is here stated to consist in this, that whereas they were created, he is begotten; and the apostle's reasoning is fallacious, unless this expression intimates a proper and peculiar filiation." (7) "He hath

obtained," says Bishop Hall, "a more excellent name than the angels, namely, to be called and to be the Son of God, not by grace and adoption; but by nature and communication of essence."

This argument from Christ's superiority to all creatures, even the most exalted, shows the sentiment of St. Paul as to Divinity being implied in the title son, given to the Messiah in the second Psalm. In this several of the ancient Jewish commentators agree with

him; and here we see one of the sources from which the Jews derived their notion of the existence of a Divine Son of God.

(7) Holden's Testimonies. "Non dicit Deus adoptavi, sed generavi te: quod communicationem ejusdem essentiae et naturae divinae significat, modo tameu prorsu ineffabile." (Michaelis.) Though the above argument stands independent of the interpretations which have been given to the clause "this day have I begotten

thee," the following passage from Witsius, in some parts of its argument, has great weight:-

"But we cannot so easily concede to our adversaries, that, by the generation of Christ, mentioned in the second Psalm, his resurrection from the dead is intended, and that by this day, we are to understand the day on which God, having raised him from the dead, appointed him the King of his Church. For, 1, To beget signifies nowhere in the sacred volume to rescue

from death; and we are not at liberty to coin new significations of words. 2. Though, possibly, it were used in that metaphorical acceptation, (which, however, is not yet proved,) it cannot be understood in this passage in any other than its proper sense. It is here adduced as a reason for which Christ is called the Son of God. - Now Christ is the Son of God, not figuratively, but properly; for the Father is called his proper Father, and he himself is denominated the proper Son of the Father, by which

designation he is distinguished from those who are his sons in a metaphorical sense. 3.

These words are spoken to Christ with a certain emphasis, with which they would not have been addressed to any of the angels, much less to any of mankind; but if they meant nothing more than the raising of him from the dead, they would attribute nothing to Christ which he doth not possess in common with many others, who, in like manner, are raised up by the power of

God, to glory and an everlasting kingdom. 4. Christ raised himself from the dead, too, by his own power; from which it would follow, according to this interpretation, that he begat himself, and that he is his own son. 5. It is not true, in fine, that Christ was not begotten of the Father, nor called his Son, till that very day on which he was raised from the dead; for, as is abundantly manifest from the Gospel history, he often, when yet alive, professed himself the Son of God, and was often acknowledged as such. 6.

To-day refers to time, when human concerns are in question; but this expression, when applied to Divine things, must be understood in a sense suitable to the majesty of the Godhead. And, if any word may be transferred from time, to denote eternity, which is the complete and perfect possession, at once, of an interminable life, what can be better adapted to express its unsuccessive duration than the term today? Nor can our adversaries derive any support to their cause from

the words of Paul, Acts 13:32, 33,* And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us, their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus, as it is also written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.' For, 1, Paul doth not here prove the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, from this expression in the second Psalm (which, though it describes him who is raised again, doth not prove his resurrection,) but from

Isaiah 4:3, and Psalm 16:10; while he adds, (verses 34 and 35,) Ànd as concerning that he raised him up from the dead,' &c.

2. The words 'raised up Jesus,' do not even relate to the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, but to the exhibition of him as a Savior. This raising of him up is expressly distinguished from the raising of him again from the dead, which is subsequently spoken of, verse 34. The meaning is, that God fulfilled the promise made to the

fathers, when he exhibited Christ to mankind in the flesh. But what was that promise? This appears from the second Psalm, where God promises to the Church, that, in due time, he would anoint, as King over her, his own Son, begotten of himself to-DAY; that is, from eternity to eternity, for with God there is a perpetual today.

Grotius, whose name is not offensive to our opposers, has remarked, that Luke makes use of the same word to signify exhibiting, in Acts 2:30; 3:26. To these

we add another instance from chap, 7:37: 'A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you.' 3. Were we to admit, that the words of the Psalm are applied to the resurrection of Christ, which seemed proper to Calvin, Cameron, and several other Protestant divines, the sense will only be this, that, by his being thus raised up again, it was declared and demonstrated, that Christ is the Son of the Father, begotten of him from everlasting. The Jewish council condemned him for blasphemy, because he had

called himself the Son of God. But, by raising him again from the grave, after he had been put to death as a blasphemer, God acquitted him from that charge, and publicly recognized him as his only begotten Son. Thus he was declared, exhibited, and distinguished as the Son of God with power, expressly and particularly, to the entire exclusion of all others. The original word here employed by the apostles is remarkably expressive; and, as Ludovicus de Dieu has learnedly observed, it

signifies that Christ was placed between such bounds, and so separated and discriminated from others, that he neither should nor can be judged to be any one else than the Son of God. The expression 'with power,' may be joined with `declared;' and then the meaning will be that he was shown to be the Son of God by a powerful argument. Or it may be connected with thèSon of God;' and then it will intimate that he is the Son of God in the most ample and exalted sense of which the term is susceptible; so

that this name, when ascribed to him, is ' a more excellent name' than any that is given to the noblest of creatures." (Witsius's Dissertations on the Creed.) Solomon, in Proverbs 8:22, introduces not the personified, but the personal wisdom of God, under the same relation of a Son, and in that relation ascribes to him Divine attributes. This was another source of the notion which obtained among the ancient Jews, that there was a Divine Son of God.

"Jehovah possessed me in the beginning of his way,

Before his works of old.

I was anointed from everlasting,

From the beginning, before the world was,

When there were no depths, I was born," &c. (8)

(8) Holden's Translation of Proverbs. In the notes to chapter viii, the application of this description of wisdom to Christ is ably and learnedly defended.

Here, "from considering the excellence of wisdom,

the transition is easy to the undefiled source of it. Abstract wisdom now disappears, and the inspired writer proceeds to the delineation of a Divine Being, who is portrayed in colors of such splendor and majesty, as can be attributed to no other than the eternal Son of God." (Holdens Translation of Proverbs.) "Jehovah possessed me in the beginning of his way." "The Father possessed the Son, had, or, as it were, acquired him by an eternal generation. To say of the attribute wisdom, that God

possessed it in the beginning of his work of creation, is trifling; certainly it is too futile an observation to fall from any sensible writer; how, then, can it be attributed to the wise monarch of Israel?" (Holden's Translation of Proverbs.) "I was anointed from everlasting." - "Can it, with propriety, be said of an attribute, that it was anointed, invested with power and authority from everlasting! In what way, literal or figurative, can the expression be predicated of a quality? But it is strictly applicable to the Divine

Logos, who was anointed by the effusion of the Spirit; who was invested with power and dignity from everlasting; and who, from all eternity, derived his existence and essence from the Father; for in him ' dwelleth all the fullness of the God-head bodily.' "(Holden's Translation of Proverbs.)

It is a confirmation of the application of Solomon's description of wisdom to the second person of the Trinity, that the ancient Jewish writers, (Philo among the number,) as

Allix has shown, (Judgment of the Jewish Church,) speak of the generation of Wisdom, and by that term mean

"the Word" a personal appellation so familiar to them. Nor is there anything out of the common course of the thinking of the ancient Hebrews in these passages of Solomon, when applied to the personal wisdom; since he, as we have seen, must, like them, have been well enough acquainted with a distinction of persons in the Trinity, and knew

Jehovah, their Lawgiver and King, under the title of "the Word of the Lord," as the Maker of all things, and the Revealer of his will, in a word, as Divine, and yet distinct from the Father. The relation in the Godhead of Father and Son was not, therefore, to the Jews an unrevealed mystery, and sufficiently accounts for the ideas of Divinity which they, in the days of Christ, connected with the appellation Son of God.

This relation is most unequivocally expressed in

the prophecy of Micah, chap, 5:2, "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting;" or, as it is in the margin, "from the days of eternity." (9) Here the person spoken of is said to have had a twofold birth, or "going forth." (1) By a natural birth he came forth from Bethlehem to Judah; by another and a higher, he was from the days of

eternity. One is opposed to the other; but the last is carried into eternity itself by words which most clearly intimate an existence prior to the birth in Bethlehem, and that an eternal one: while the term used and translated his "goings forth," conveys precisely the same idea as the eternal generation of the Son of God. "The passage carefully distinguishes his human nature from his eternal generation. The prophet describes him who was to ' come out of Bethlehem' by another more eminent

coming or going forth, even from all eternity. This is so signal a description of the Divine generation, before all time, or of that going forth from everlasting of Christ, the eternal Son of God; 'God, of the substance of the Father, begotten, before the worlds;' who was afterward in time made man, and born into the world in Bethlehem, that the prophecy evidently belongs to him, and could never be verified of any other." (Dr. Pocock.)

(9) So the LXX, and the Vulgate, and the critics

generally. "Antiquissima erit origine, ab aeternis temporibus." (Bathe.) "Imo a diebus aeternitatis, i. e. priusquam natus fuerit, jam ab aeterno extitit." (Rosenmuller.)

(1) The word yatsa to come forth, is used in reference to birth frequently, as Gen. 17:6; 2 Kings 20:18; and so the Pharisees understood it, when referring to this passage, in answer to Herod's inquiry, where Christ should be "born" - The plural form, his "goings forth" from eternity, denotes eminency.

To signify the perfection and excellency of that generation, the word for birth is expressed plurally; for it is a common Hebraism to denote the eminency or continuation of a thing or action by the plural number. God shall judge the world "in righteousness and equity;" or most righteously and equitably, Psalm 98:9. - "The angers of the Lord," Lam. 4:16, &c.

This text, indeed, so decidedly indicates that peculiar notion of the Divinity of our Lord, which

is marked by the term and the relation of son, that it is not surprising that Socinians should resort to the utmost violence of criticism to escape its powerful evidence. Dr. Priestley, therefore, says,

"that it may be understood concerning the promises of God, in which the coming of Christ was signified to mankind from the beginning of the world." But nothing can be more forced or unsupported. The word here employed never signifies the work of God in predicting future events:

but is often used to express natural birth and origin. So it is unquestionably used in the preceding clause, and cannot be supposed to be taken in a different sense, much less in a unique sense, in that which follows, and especially when a clear antithesis is marked and intended. He was to be born in time; but was not, on that account, merely a man: he was "from the days of eternity." By his natural birth, or "going forth," he was from Bethlehem; but his "goings forth,"

his production, his heavenly birth or generation, was from everlasting; for so the Hebrew word means, though, like our own word "ever," it is sometimes accommodated to temporal duration.

Its proper sense is that of eternity, and it is used in passages which speak of the infinite duration of God himself.

Others refer "his goings forth from everlasting," to the purpose of God that he should come into the world; but this is too

absurd to need refutation: no such strange form of speech as this would be, if taken in this sense, occurs in the Scriptures: and it would be mere trifling so solemnly to affirm that of Messiah, which is just as true of any other person born into the world. This passage must, then, stand as an irrefutable proof of the faith of the ancient Jewish Church, both in the Divinity and the Divine Sonship of Messiah; and, as Dr. Hales well observes, (Hales's Analysis,)

"This prophecy of Micah is, perhaps, the most important single prophecy in the Old Testament, and the most comprehensive respecting the personal character of the Messiah, and his successive manifestation to the world. It crowns the whole chain of prophecies descriptive of the several limitations of the blessed Seed of the woman, to the line of Shem, to the family of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to the tribe of Judah, and to the royal house of David, here terminating in his birth at Bethlehem, 'the

city of David.' It carefully distinguishes his human nativity from his eternal generation; foretells the rejection of the Israelites and Jews for a season, their final restoration, and the universal peace destined to prevail throughout the earth in 'the regeneration.'

It forms, therefore, the basis of the New Testament, which begins with his human birth at Bethlehem, the miraculous circumstances of which are recorded in the introductions of Matthew's and Luke's Gospels; his

eternal generation, as the oracle, or wisdom, in the sublime introduction of John's Gospel; his prophetic character and second coming illustrated in the four Gospels and the Epistles; ending with a prediction of the speedy approach of the latter, in the Apocalypse, Rev. 22:20."

The same relation of son, in the full view of supreme Divinity, and where no reference appears to be had to the office and future work of Messiah, is found in Proverbs 30:4, ' Who

hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? Who hath gathered the wind in his fists? Who hath bound the waters in a garment? Who hath established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?" Here the Deity is contemplated, not in his redeeming acts, in any respect or degree; not as providing for the recovery of a lost race, or that of the Jewish people, by the gift of his Son: he is placed before the reverend gaze of the prophet in his acts of

creative and conserving power only, managing at will and ruling the operations of nature; and yet, even in these peculiar offices of Divinity alone, he is spoken of as having a son, whose

"name" that is, according to the Hebrew idiom, whose nature, is as deep, mysterious, and unutterable as his own. "What is His name, and what is his son's name, canst thou tell?" (2) (2) Dr. A. Clarke, in his note on this text, evidently feels the difficulty of disposing of it

on the theory that the term Son is not a Divine title, and enters a sort of caveat against resorting to doubtful texts, as proofs of our Lord's Divinity. But for all purposes for which this text has ever been adduced, it is not a doubtful one; for it expresses, as clearly as possible, that God has a son, and makes no reference to the incarnation at all; so that the words are not spoken in anticipation of that event. Those who deny the Divine Sonship can never, therefore, explain that text. What follows in the note

referred to is more objectionable: it hints at the obscurity of the writer as weakening his authority. Who he was, or what he was, we indeed know not; but his words stand in the book of Proverbs; a book, the inspiration of which both our Lord and his apostles have verified, and that is enough: we need no other attestation.

The Scriptures of the Old Testament themselves in this manner furnished the Jews with the idea of a personal Son in the Divine nature; and their

familiarity with it is abundantly evident, from the frequent application of the terms "Son," "Son of God," "first and only-begotten Son,"

"Offspring of God," to the Logos, by PHILO; and that in passages where he must, in all fair interpretation, be understood as speaking of a personal) and not of a personified logos. The same terms are also found in other Jewish writers before the Christian era.

The phrase "Son of God" was, therefore, known to the ancient Jews, and to

them conveyed a very definite idea; and it is no answer to this to say, that it was a common appellative of Messiah among their ancient writers. The question is, how came "Son of God" to be an appellative of Messiah? "messiah" is an official title; "son," a personal one. It is granted that the Messiah is the Son of God; but it is denied that, therefore, the term Son of God ceases to be a personal description, and that it imports the same with Messiah. David was the "son of Jesse," and the

"king of Israel;" he, therefore, who was king of Israel was the son of Jesse; but the latter is the personal, the former only the official description; and it cannot be argued that "son of Jesse"

conveys no idea distinct from "king of Israel." On the contrary, it marks his origin and his family; for, before he was king of Israel, he was the son of Jesse. In like manner, "Son of God"

marks the natural relation of Messiah to God; and the

term Messiah his official relation to men.

The personal title cannot otherwise be explained; and as we have seen, that it was used by the Jews as one of the titles of Messiah, yet still used personally, and not officially, and, also, without any reference to the miraculous conception at all, as before proved, it follows, that it expresses a natural relation to God, subsisting not in the human, but in the higher nature of Messiah; and, this higher nature being proved to be Divine, it

follows, that the term Son of God, as applied to Jesus, is, therefore, a title of absolute Divinity, importing his participation in the very nature and essence of God. The same ideas of divine Sonship are suggested by almost every passage in which the phrase occurs in the New Testament.

"When Jesus was baptized, he went up straightway out of the water, and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon

him; and lo, a voice from heaven, This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased." The circumstances of this testimony are of the most solemn and impressive kind, and there can be no rational doubt but they were designed authoritatively to invest our Lord with the title "Son of God" in the full sense which it bears in those prophecies in which the Messiah had been introduced under that appellation, rendered still more strong and emphatic by adding the epithet

"beloved," and the declaration, that in him the "Father was well pleased." That the name "Son of God" is not here given to Christ with reference to his resurrection, need not be? stated; that it was not given to him, along with a declaration of the Father's pleasure in him, because of the manner in which he had fulfilled the office of Messiah, is also obvious, for he was but just then entering upon his office and commencing his ministry; and if, therefore, it can be proved, that it was not given to him with

reference to his miraculous conception, it must follow that it was given on grounds independent of his office, and independent of the circumstances of his birth; and that, therefore, he was in a higher nature than his human, and for a higher reason than an official one, the "Son of God."

Now this is, I think, very easily and conclusively proved. As soon as the Baptist John had heard this testimony, and seen this descent of the Holy Spirit upon him, he tells us that

he "bore record that this is the son of GOD:" - the Messiah, we grant, but not the Son of God, because he was the Messiah, but Son of God and Messiah also. This is clear, from the opinion of the Jews of that day, as before shown. It was to the Jews that he "bore record" that Jesus was the Son of God. But he used this title in the sense commonly received by his hearers. Had he simply testified that he was the Messiah, this would not to them in general have expressed the idea which all attached to the name

"Son of God," and which they took to involve a Divine character and claim. But in this ordinary sense of the title among the Jews, John the Baptist gave his testimony to him, and by that shows in what sense he himself understood the testimony of God to the Sonship of Jesus. So, in his closing testimony to Christ, recorded in John 3, he makes an evident allusion to what took place at the baptism of our Lord, and says, "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand." Here the love of the Father, as

declared at his baptism, is represented as love to him as the Son, and all things being given into his hands, as the consequence of his being his beloved Son. "All things," unquestionably, imply all offices, all power and authority: all that is included in the offices of King, Messiah, Mediator; and it is affirmed, not that he is Son, and beloved as a Son because of his being invested with these offices, but that he is invested with them, because he was the well-beloved Son; a circumstance which fully demonstrates that "Son of

God" is not an official title, and that it is not of the same import as Messiah. To the transaction at his baptism our Lord himself adverts in John 5:37: "And the father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me." For, as he had just mentioned the witness arising from his miraculous works, and, in addition to these, introduces the witness of the Father himself as distinct from the works, a personal testimony from the Father alone can be intended, and that personal testimony was given at his

baptism. Now, the witness of the Father, on this occasion, is, that he was his beloved SON; and it is remarkable that our Lord introduces the Father's testimony to his Sonship on an occasion in which the matter in dispute with the Jews was respecting his claim to be the Son of God. The Jews denied that God was his Father in the sense in which he had declared him to be so, and "they sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the Sabbath; but said also that God was his Father, making himself

equal with God." In this case, what was the conduct of our Lord? He re-affirms his Sonship even in this very objectionable sense; asserts that "the Son doeth all things soever that the Father doeth,"

verse 19; that "as the Father raiseth the dead, so the Son quickeneth whomsoever he will," verse 21; that "all judgment has been committed to the Son, that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father," verse 23; that "as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to

the Son to have life in himself," verse 26: and then confirms all these high claims of equality with the Father, by adducing the Father's own witness at his baptism: "And the Father himself hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape; and ye have not his word abiding in you, for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not." (3) With respect to this testimony, two critical remarks have been made, which, though not essential to the argument, farther corroborate the views just

taken. The one is, that in all the three evangelists who record the testimony of the Father to Christ at his baptism, the article is prefixed both to the substantive and the adjective. Matt. 3:17, Outos estin o uios ms o agaphtos, the most discriminating mode of expression that could be employed, as if to separate Jesus from every other who, at any time, had received the appellation of the Son of God: This is that Son of mine who is the beloved. In the second clause, "in whom I am well pleased," the verb in all the

three evangelists is in the first aorist, en o eudokhoa. Now, although we often render the Greek aorist by the English present, yet this can be done with propriety only when the proposition is equally true, whether it be stated in the present, in the past, or in the future time. And thus the analogy of the Greek language requires us not only to consider the name Son of God, as applied in a peculiar sense to Jesus, but also to refer the expression used at his baptism to that inter-course which had subsisted between the

Father and the Son, before this name was announced to men.

(4)

(3) Though the argument does not at all depend upon it, yet it may be proper to refer to Campbell's translation of these verses, as placing some of the clauses in this passage in a clearer light. "Now the Father, who sent me, hath him-self attested me. Did ye never hear his voice, or see his form? Or, have ye for-gotten his declaration, that ½ye believe not him whom he hath

commissioned?'" On this translation Dr. Campbell remarks, "The reader will observe, that the two clauses, which are rendered in the English Bible as declarations, are, in this version, translated as questions. The difference in the original is only in the pointing. That they ought to be so read, we need not, in my opinion, stronger evidence than that they throw much light upon the whole passage. Our Lord here refers to the testimony given at his baptism; and when you road the two

clauses as questions, all the chief circumstances attending that memorable testimony are exactly pointed out. 'Have ye never heard his voice, phonh ek ton sranon; nor seen his form?' the somatikon cidos, in which, St. Luke says, the Holy Ghost descended. ' And have ye not his declaration abiding in you?' ton logos, the words which were spoken at that time."

(4) "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, that is, have always been well pleased,

am at present well pleased, and will continue to be well pleased." (Macknight.) The epithet "only begotten," which several times occurs in the New Testament, affords farther proof of the Sonship of Christ in his Divine nature. One of these instances only need be selected.

"The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." If the epithet only begotten referred to Christ's

miraculous conception, then the glory "as of the only begotten" must be a glory of the human nature of Christ only, for that alone was capable of being thus conceived. This is, however, clearly contrary to the scope of the passage, which does not speak of the glory of the nature, "the flesh," which "the word" assumed, but of the glory of the Word himself, who is here said to be the only begotten of the Father. It is, therefore, the glory of his Divine nature which is here intended. (5) Such, too, was the sense in which

the primitive Church and the immediate followers of the apostles understood the title monogenes, only begotten, or only Son, as Bishop Bull has shown at length, (Judicium Eccles.) and "to him and others," says Dr. Waterland, "I may refer for proof that the title, Son of God, or only-begotten Son in Scripture, cannot be reasonably understood either of our Lord's miraculous conception by the Holy Ghost, or of his Messiahship, or of his being the first begotten from the dead, or of his

receiving all power, and his being appointed heir of all things. None of these circumstances, singly considered, nor all together, will be sufficient to account for the title only Son, or only begotten; but it is necessary to look higher up to the pre-existent and Divine nature of the Word, who was in the beginning with God, and was himself very God, before the creation, and from all eternity. Angels and men have been called sons of God, in an improper and metaphorical

sense, but they have never been styled

"only begotten," nor indeed, "sons," in any such distinguishing and emphatic manner as Christ is.

They are sons by adoption, or faint resemblance; he is truly, properly, and eminently, Son of God and, therefore, God, as every son of man is, therefore, truly man." The note in the Socinian version tells us," that this expression does not refer to any peculiar mode of derivation or existence; but is used to

express merely a higher degree of affection, and is applied to Isaac, though Abraham had other sons." Isaac is, however, so called, because he was the only child which Abraham had by his wife Sarah, and this instance is, therefore, against them. The other passages in this Gospel and in St. John's First Epistle, in which the term is used, give no countenance to this interpretation, and in the only other passages in the New Testament, in which it occurs, it unquestionably means an "only son or child." Luke 7:12, "Behold

there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother." Luke 8:42, "For he had one only daughter." Luke 9:38, "Master, look upon my son, for he is my only child." Here, then, on the one hand, there is no passage in which the epithet only begotten occurs, which indicates by any other phrase or circumstance, that it has the force of well beloved; while there are several, which, from the circumstances, oblige us to interpret it literally as expressive of a peculiar relationship of the child to

the parent, an only, an only-begotten child. This is, then, the sense in which it is used of Christ, and it must respect either his Divine or human nature. Those who refer it to his human nature, consider it as founded upon his miraculous conception. It is, however, clear, that that could not constitute him a son, except as it consisted in the immediate formation of the manhood of our Lord by the power of God; but, in this respect, he was not the "only begotten" not the

"only Son" because Adam was thus also immediately produced, and for this very reason is called by St. Luke, "the son of God." Seeing, then, that monogenhs, only begotten, does not anywhere import the affection of a parent, but the peculiar relation of an only son; and that this peculiarity does not apply to the production of the mere human nature of our Lord, the first man being in this sense, and for this very reason, "a son of God," thereby excluding Christ, considered as a man, from the relation of only Son, the

epithet can only be applied to the Divine nature of our Lord, in which alone, he is at once naturally and exclusively "the son of the living God."

(5) "The glory as of the only begotten," &c. "The particle hos, as, is not here a note of similitude, but of confirmation, that this Son was the only begotten of the Father." (Whitby.) "This particle sometimes answers to the Hebrew ach, and signifies certe, truly." (Ibid.) So Schleusner, in voc.

15, revera, vere The clause may, therefore, be properly rendered, "The glory indeed, or truly of the only begotten of the Father."

All those passages, too, which declare that "all things were made by the Son" and that God "sent his Son," into the world may be considered as declarations of a Divine Sonship, because they imply that the creator was, at the very period of creation, a son, and that he was the Son of God, when and consequently before, he was sent into the world;

and thus both will prove, that that relation is independent either of his official appointment as Messiah, or of his incarnation. The only plausible objection to this is, that when a person is designated by a particular title, he is often said to perform actions under that title, though the designation may have been given to him subsequently. Certain acts may be said to have been done by the king, though, in fact, he performed them before his advancement to the throne; and we ascribe the

"Principia" to Sir Isaac Newton, though that work was written before he received the honor of knighthood. In this manner we are told, by those who allow the Divinity of Christ, while they deny his Divine Son-ship, that, as Son of God was one of the common appellations of Christ among his disciples, it was natural for them to ascribe creation, and other Divine acts performed before the incarnation, to the Son, meaning merely that they were done by that same Divine person who in consequence of his

incarnation and miraculous conception, became the Son of God, and was by his disciples acknowledged as such.

The whole of this argument supposes that the titles "the son," "the Son of God," are merely human titles, and that they are applied to Christ, when considered as God, and in his pre-existent state, only in consequence of that interchange of appellations to which the circumstance of the union of two natures, Divine and human, in one person, so naturally leads.

Thus it is said, that the "Lord of glory" was "crucified;" that God purchased the Church "with his own blood;" that

"the son of man" was "in heaven" before the ascension. So also in familiar style, we speak of the Divinity of jesus, and of the Godhead of the son of mary. An interchange of appellations is acknowledged; but then even this supposes that some of them are designations of his Divine, while others describe his assumed nature; and the

simple circumstance of such an interchange will no more prove the title Son of God to be a human designation, than it will prove SON of Mary to be a Divine one. Farther, if such an interchange of titles be thus contended for, we may then ask, which of the titles, in strict appropriation, designate the human, and which the Divine nature of our Lord? If "Son of God" be, in strictness, a human designation, and so it must be, if it relate not to his Divinity, then we may say that our Savior, as God, has

no distinctive name at all in the whole Scriptures. The title "God" does not distinguish him from the other persons of the trinity, and word stands in precisely the same predicament as SON; for the same kind of criticism may reduce it to merely an official appellative, given because of his being the medium of instructing men in the will of God; and it may, with equal force, be said that he is called "the Word" in his pre-existent state only, because he in time, became the Word, in like manner as, in time also

he became the Son. The other names of Christ are all official; and as in the Scriptures we have no such phrase as "the second person in the trinity" and other theological designations, since adopted, to express the Divinity of Christ, the denial of the title son as a designation of Divinity leads to this remarkable conclusion, (remarkable especially, when considered as coming from those who hold the Deity of Christ,) that we have not in Scripture, neither in the Old nor the New

Testament, a single appellation which, in strictness and truth of speech, can be used to express the Divine person of him who was made flesh and dwelt among us. If, then, an interchange of Divine and human designations be allowed, the title "Son of God" may still be a Divine description for anything which such an interchange implies; if it is not a designation of his Divinity, we are left without a name for our Savior as God, and considered as existing before the incarnation, and

so there can properly be no interchange of Divine and human titles at all.

But the notion that the title Son of God is an appellation of the human nature of our Lord, applied sometimes to him, when his Divine character and acts are distinctly considered, by a customary interchange of designations, is a mere assumption. There is nothing to prove it, while all those passages which connect the title "Son," immediately, and by way of eminence, with his Divinity

remain wholly unaccounted for on this theory, and are, therefore, contrary to it. Let a few of these be examined. It is evident that, in a peculiar sense, he claims God as his Father, and that with no reference either to the incarnation or resurrection, or to any thing beside a relation in the Divine nature. So, when he had said to the Jews, "My Father worketh hitherto and I work;"

the Jews so understood him to claim God for his Father as to equal himself

with God - "they sought the more to kill him, because he had not only broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, pateda idion, his own proper father, making himself equal with God;" and, so far from correcting this as an error in his hearers, which he was bound to do by every moral consideration, if they had so greatly mistaken him, he goes on to confirm them in their opinion as to the extent of his claims, declaring, that "what things soever the Father doeth, these also doth the Son

likewise; and that as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given the Son to have life in himself." In all this it is admitted by our Lord, that whatever he is and has is from the Father; which is, indeed, implied in the very name and relation of SON; but if this communication be not of so peculiar a kind as to imply an equality with God, a sameness of nature and perfections, there is not only an unwarrantable presumption in the words of our Lord, but, in the circumstances in which they were uttered, there is

an equivocation in them inconsistent with the sincerity of an honest man. This argument is confirmed by attending to a similar passage in the tenth chapter of John. Our Lord says, "They shall never perish; my Father which gave them me is greater than I, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one.

Then the Jews took up stones to stone him." And they assign, for so doing, the very same reason which St. John has mentioned in

the fifth chapter: "We stone thee for blasphemy, because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God" Our Lord's answer is: "Is it not written in your law, I said ye are gods? If he called them gods unto whom the word of God came, and the Scriptures cannot be broken," i. e. if the language of Scripture be unexceptionable, "say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God?" These words are sometimes quoted in support of the

opinion of those who hold that our Savior is called the Son of God, purely upon account of the commission which he received. "But the force of the argument and the consistency of the discourse require us to affix a much higher meaning to that expression. Our Lord is reasoning a fortiori. He vindicates himself from the charge of blasphemy in calling himself the Son of God, because even those who hold civil offices upon earth are called, in Scripture, gods. (6) But that he might not appear to

put himself upon a level with them, and to retract his former assertion, 'I and my Father are one,' he not only calls himself `him whom the Father hath sent into the world,' which implies that he had a being, and that God was his Father, before he was sent; but he subjoins, ' If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though you believe not me, believe the works, that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him,' expressions which appear to be equivalent to his former assertion, ' I and

the Father are one,' and which were certainly understood by the Jews in that sense, for as soon as he uttered them they sought again to take him." (Hill's Lectures.)

(6) "This argument, which is from the less to the greater, proceeds thus: If those who having nothing Divine in them, namely, the judges of the great Sanhedrim, to whom the psalmist there speaks, are called gods for this reason only, that they have in them a certain imperfect image of Divine power and

authority, how much more may I be called God, the Son of God, who am the natural Son of God." (Bishop Bull)

To these two eminent instances, in which our Lord claims God as his Father, in reference solely to his Divine nature, and to no circumstance whatever connected with his birth or his offices, may be added his unequivocal answer, on his trial, to the direct question of the Jewish council. -

"Then said they all, Art thou the Son of God? and

he saith unto them, Ye say that I am," that is, I am that ye say; thus declaring that, in the very sense in which they put the question, he was the Son of God. In confessing himself to be, in that sense, the Son of God, he did more than claim to be the Messiah, for the council judged him for that reason guilty of "blasphemy;" a charge which could not lie against any one, by the Jewish law, for professing to be the Messiah. It was in their judgment a case of blasphemy, explicitly provided against by their

"law," which inflicted death upon the offence; but, in the whole Mosaic institute, it is not a capital crime to assume the title and character of Messiah. Why, then, did the confession of Christ, that he was the "Son of God,"

in answer to the interrogatory of the council, lead them to exclaim, "What need we any farther witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth-he is worthy of death." "We have a law, and by our law he ought to die." The reason is given,

"because he made himself the son or God."

His "blasphemy" was alleged to lie in this; this, therefore, implied an invasion of the rights and honors of the Divine nature, and was, in their view, an assumption of positive Divinity. Our Lord, by his conduct, shows that they did not mistake his intention. He allows them to proceed against him without lowering his pretensions, or correcting their mistake; which, had they really fallen into one, as to the import of the title

"Son of God," he must have done, or been accessory to his own condemnation. (7)

(7) See this argument largely and ably stated in Wilson's "Illustration of the Method of explaining the New Testament, by the early opinions of Jews and Christians concerning Christ."

As in none of these passages the title Son of God can possibly be considered as a designation of his human nature or office; so, in the apostolic writings, we find proof of equal force that it is used

even by way of opposition and contradistinction to the human and inferior nature. Romans 1:3, 4, "Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." A very few remarks will be sufficient to point out the force of this passage. The apostle, it is to be observed, is not speaking of what Christ is officially, but of what he is personally and essentially,

for the truth of all his official claims depends upon the truth of his personal ones: if he be a Divine person, he is everything else he assumes to be. He is, therefore, considered by the apostle distinctly in his two natures. As a man he was "flesh," "of the seed of David," and a son of David; in a superior nature he was Divine, and the Son of God. To prove that he was of the seed of David, no evidence was necessary but the Jewish genealogies: to prove him Divine, or, as the apostle chooses to express

it, "the Son of God," evidence of a higher kind was necessary, and it was given in his "resurrection from the dead." That "declared him to be the Son of God with power" or powerfully determined and marked him out to be the Son of God, a Divine person. That an opposition is expressed between what Christ was according to the flesh, and what he was according to a higher nature, must be allowed, or there is no force in the apostle's observation; and equally clear it must be, that the nature, put in

opposition to the fleshly nature, can be no other than the Divine nature of Christ, the apostolic designation of which is the "SON of God."

This opposition between the two natures is sufficiently marked for the purpose of the argument, without taking into account the import of the phrase in the passage just quoted, "according to the Spirit of holiness," which, by many critics, is considered as equivalent to "according to his Divine nature"

Because of the opposition, stated by the apostle, between what Christ was, kata, according to, in respect of the flesh; and his being declared the Son of God with power, kata, according to, in respect of "the Spirit of holiness;" Macknight, following many others, interprets the "Spirit of holiness" to mean the Divine nature of Christ, as "the flesh" signifies his whole human nature.

To this Schleusner adds his authority, sub voce agiosunh. "Summa Dei majestas et perfectio, Rom.

1:4, kata pnsuma agiosunh. Quoad vim suam et majestatem divinam. Similiter in vers.

Alex. non solum, Heb. dowr, Psa. 145:4, 5, sed etiam to show respondet, Psa. 97:12."

Doddridge demurs to this, on the ground of its being unusual in Scripture to call the Divine nature of Christ "the Spirit of holiness," or the "Holy Spirit." This is, however, far from a conclusive objection: it is not so clear that there are not several instances of this in Scripture; and certain it is, that the most ancient fathers frequently use the terms "Spirit" and "Spirit of God" to express the

Divine nature of our Lord. "Certissimum est," says Bishop Bull, "Filium Dei, secundum Deitatis hypostasin in scriptis Patrum titulo Spiritus, et Spiritus Dei et Spiritus Sancti passim insigniri." To this we may add the authority of many other eminent critics. (8) (8) "We have observed so often before, that the spirit in Christ, especially when opposed to the flesh, denotes his Divine nature, that it is needless to repeat it. Nor ought it to seem strange, that Christ, as the Son of God, and God, is

here called the Spirit of holiness, an appellation generally given to the third person of the Divinity, for the same Divine and spiritual nature is common to every person of the trinity. Hence we have observed, that Hernias, a contemporary of St. Paul, has expressly called the Divine person of the Son of God, a Holy Spirit." (Bull.) "When the term Spirit refers to Christ, and is put in opposition to the flesh, it denotes his Divine nature." (Schaettgen.) The same view is taken of the passage

by Beza, Erasmus, Cameron, Hammond, Poole, and Macknight. The note of Dr. Guyse contains a powerful reason for this interpretation.

"If `the Spirit of holiness' is here considered as expressive of the sense in which Christ is ' the Son of God,' it evidently signifies his Divine nature, in opposition to what he was according to the flesh; and so the antithesis is very beautiful between kata Pneuma, according to the Spirit, and kata sarx, according to the flesh. But

if we consider it as the principle of the power by which Christ was raised from the dead, for demonstrating him to be the Son of God, it may signify either his own Divine nature or the Holy Spirit, the third person in the adorable trinity; and yet, unless his own Divine nature concurred in raising him from the dead, his resurrection, abstractedly considered in itself, no more proved him to be the Son of God, than the resurrection of believers, by the power of God, and by 'his Spirit who dwelleth

in them,' Rom. 8:11, prove any of them to be so." It is also in corroboration of this view that Christ represents himself as the agent of his own resurrection. "I lay down my life, and I have power to take it again." "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

The whole argument of the Apostle Paul, in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, is designed to prove our Lord superior to angels, and he adduces, as conclusive evidence on this point, that to none of the

angels was it ever said, "Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee.

And again, I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son." It is, therefore, clear, that on this very ground of Sonship, our Lord is argued to be superior to angels, that is, superior in nature, and in natural relation to God; for in no other way is the argument conclusive. He has his title Son, by inheritance, that is, by natural and hereditary right. It is by "inheritance" that he hath obtained a

"more excellent name" than angels; that is, by his being of the Father, and, therefore, by virtue of his Divine filiation. Angels may be, in an inferior sense, the sons of God by creation; but they cannot inherit that title, for this plain reason, that they are created not begotten; while our Lord inherits the "more excellent name" because he is "begotten" not created. "For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?" (9) The same ideas of absolute Divinity, connect

themselves with the title throughout this chapter. "THE son," by whom "God in these latter days hath spoken to us," is "the brightness, the effulgence of his glory, and the express, or exact and perfect image of his person." But it is only to the Divine nature of our Lord that these expressions can refer. "The brightness of his glory" is a phrase in which allusion is made to a luminous body which is made visible by its own effulgence. The Father is compared to the original fountain of light, and the

Son to the effulgence or body of rays streaming from it. Thus we are taught, that the essence of both is the same; that the one is inseparable from, and not to be conceived of without the other; consequently, that neither of them ever was or could be alone. The Son is declared to be of the same nature and eternity with the Father; "And from hence, more particularly, the Church seems to have taken the occasion of confessing in opposition to the Arian heresy, as we find it done in one of our

creeds, that 'Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, was begotten of the Father before all worlds, that he is God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, of one substance with the Father, by whom all things are made.'" (Stanhope.) Certainly, this brightness, or effulgence from the Father is expressly spoken of the SON; but it cannot be affirmed of him with reference to his humanity; and if it must necessarily be understood of his superior, his Divine nature, it necessarily implies the

idea which is suggested by Sonship. For if the second person of the trinity were co-ordinate and independent, in no good sense could he be the effulgence, the luster of the glory of the Father. He might exhibit an equal and rival glory, as one sun equally large and bright with another; but our Lord would, in that case, be no more an effulgence of the glory of the Father than one of these suns would be an effulgence of the other. The "express image of his person" is equally a note of filial Divinity. The word

sphragis signifies an impression or mark, answering to a seal or stamp, or die, and therefore an exact and perfect resemblance, as the figure on the coin answers to the die by which it is stamped, and the image on the wax to the engraving on the seal.

It is impossible that this should be spoken of a creature, because it cannot be true of any creature; and therefore not true of the human nature of our Lord. "The sentiment is, indeed, too high for our ideas to

reach. This, however, seems to be fully implied in it, that the Son is personally distinct from the Father, for the impression and the seal are not one thing, and that the essential nature of both is one and the same," (Dr. P. Smith) since one is so the exact and perfect image of the other, that our Lord could say, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." (1) Still, however, the likeness is not that of one independent, and unrelated being to another, as of man to man; but the more perfect one of Son to

Father. So it is expressly affirmed; for it is "the son" who is this "express image:" nor would the resemblance of one independent Divine person to another come up to the idea conveyed by katharism=n to=n hamartio=n. Both this and the preceding phrase, the "brightness of his glory." with sufficient clearness denote not only sameness of essence and distinction of person, but dependence and communication also; ideas which are preserved and harmonized in the

doctrine of the sonship of Christ, and in no other.

(9) It may be granted, that kleronomeo is not always used to express the obtaining of a thing by strict hereditary right; but also to acquire it by other means, though still the idea of right is preserved. The argument of the apostle, however, compels us to take the word in its primary and proper sense, which is well expressed in our translation to obtain by inheritance. "The apostle's argument, taken from the name Son of God, is this-he

hath that name by inheritance, or on account of his descent from God; and Jesus, by calling himself the only begotten of the Father, hath excluded from that honorable relation angels and every other beings whatever."

(Macknight.)

(1) "Imago majestatis Divinae, ita, ut, qui Filium videt, etiam Patrem videat." (Schleusner.) In the same conjunction of the term son with ideas of absolute Divinity, the apostle, in a subsequent

part of the same chapter, applies that lofty passage in the forty-fifth Psalm, "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever," &c. The Socinian criticisms on this passage have already been refuted; and it is only necessary to remark on this passage as it is in proof of the Divine Sonship. It is allowed, by all who hold his Deity, that Christ is here addressed as a being composed of two natures, God and man. "The unction with the 'oil of gladness,' and the elevation above his 'fellows,' characterize the

manhood; and the perpetual stability of his throne, and the unsullied justice of the government, declare the godhead." (Bishop Horsley.) He is, however, called the SON; but this is a term which could not characterize the Being here introduced, unless it agreed to his higher and Divine nature. The Son is addressed; that Son is addressed as God, as God whose throne is forever and ever; and by this argument it is that the apostle proves the son to be superior to angels.

A few other passages may be introduced, which, with equal demonstration, attach the term Son, eminently and emphatically, to our Lord's Divine nature.

"God sending his own son, in the likeness of sinful flesh," Romans 8:3. Here the person entitled the son, is said to be sent in the like, ness of sinful flesh. In what other way could he have been sent, if he were Son only as a man? The apostle most clearly intimates that he was son before he was sent; and that flesh was the

nature assumed by the Son, but not the nature in which he was the Son, as he there uses the term.

"Moses, verily, was faithful in all his house as a servant, but Christ as a son over his own house."

"This is illustrative of the position before laid down, (verse 3,) that Jesus was counted worthy of more glory than Moses. The Jewish lawgiver was only ' as a servant,' but Christ ' as a SON;' but if the latter were only a Son in a metaphorical sense, the contrast would be entirely

destroyed; he could only be a servant, like Moses, and the grounds of his superiority, as a Son, would be completely subverted; he must, therefore, be a Son in respect to his Divine nature. In conformity with this conclusion, it is here said that Moses was faithful in all his house as a servant in the Jewish Church, but Christ was faithful over his own house; over the Christian Church as its Lord and Master." (Holden's Testimonies.) "Moses erat en to oicho, et pertinebat ad familiam; Christus vero

epi ton oichon, supra familiam, ut ejus praefectus et dominius." (Rosenmuller.)

"He says that Moses was faithful as a servant-Christ as a Son, and that Christ was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honor than the house; that is, the difference between Christ and Moses is that which is between him who creates and the thing created." (Bishop Towline.) To be a Son is then, in the apostle's

sense of the passage, to be a Creator; and to be a servant, a creature; a decisive proof that Christ is called Son, as God, because he is put in contradistinction to a creature.

To these may be added all those passages in which the first person is called the father of our Lord Jesus Christ; because as, when the persons are distinctly spoken of, it is clear, that he who produced the human nature of Christ, in the womb of the virgin, was the third person, a fact

several times emphatically and expressly declared in the New Testament; so, as far as natural relation is concerned, the first person can only have paternity with reference to the Divine nature of the Son; and we are reduced to admit, either that the terms Father and Son are wholly figurative, or that they express a natural relation, which relation, however, can only subsist between these persons in the Godhead.

"For," as it has been very justly observed, "at the very

same time that our Lord, most expressly, calls the first person of the Godhead his Father, he makes the plainest distinction that is possible between the Father, as such, and the Holy Ghost. By the personal acts which he ascribes to the Spirit of God, he distinguishes the first person, as his Father, from the third person of the Divine essence; for, he said, Ì will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever, even the Spirit of truth ' This Comforter, said

he, ' is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name. But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me,' John 14:16, 17, 26; 15:26. Here our Lord calls the first person, most expressly and undeniably, ' the Father, ' and the third person, as expressly 'the Holy Ghost.' It is most evident, and beyond even the possibility of a doubt, that he does not, by these two appellatives, mean one and

the self-same Divine person; for he says, he ' will pray the Father' to send the Comforter to his Church, calling him 'the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in his name.' And he sends 'the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of truth, from the Father, which proceedeth from the Father.' Therefore, the Holy Ghost is not that Father, nor the self-same subsistent as that Father, nor is the creation of the human nature the only begetting, or the Scriptural Sonship of our Lord Jesus Christ; for, if this were really so, the

Father would be sending forth the Father, and the Father would be proceeding from the Father, and the Son would be praying for all this.

But these are absurdities too glaring to be indulged for a single moment by common sense; so that we conceive it must be as clear as the light of heaven, that the first and second persons of the Godhead are to each other a Father and a Son in the Divine essence." (Martin on the Eternal Sonship of Christ.)

Thus, then, from the import of these passages, and many others might be added, were it necessary, I think that it is established, that the title Son of God is not an appellative of the human nature applied by metonymy to the Divine nature, as the objectors say, and that it cannot, on this hypothesis, be explained. As little truth will be found in another theory, adopted by those who admit the Divinity of our Lord, but deny his eternal filiation;- that he is called "Son of God" on account of his incarnation:

that in the Old Testament he was so called in anticipation of this event, and in the New because of the fact that he was God manifest in the flesh.

As, however, all such persons acknowledge the title "Son of God" to be a descriptive, not an arbitrary title, and that it has its foundation in some real relation; so, if the incarnation of Christ be the foundation of that title, it must be used with reference either to the nature in which he was incarnated, that is to say,

his manhood; or to that which incarnated itself, that is to say, his Godhead; or to the action of incarnation that is the act of assuming our nature. If the first be allowed, then this is saying no more than that he is the Son of God, because of his miraculous conception in the womb of the virgin, which has been already refuted. If the second, then it is yielded, that, with reference to the Godhead, he is the Son, which is what we contend for; and it is allowed, that the "holy thing," or offspring, born of Mary, is,

therefore, called the Son of God, not because his humanity was formed in her womb immediately by God; but, as it is expressly stated in Luke 1:35, because "the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee," the effect of which would be the assumption of humanity by the Divine nature of him who is, in that nature, the Son; and that the holy offspring should, on that account, be called the Son of God. This would fully allow the doctrine of Christ's Divine

Sonship, and is, probably, the real import of the important passage referred to. (2) But if the title Son is given to Christ, neither with reference to the miraculous conception of the human nature, nor yet because the higher nature united to it in one person is, eminently and peculiarly, the Son of God; then it only remains to those who refer the title to the incarnation of our Lord, to urge that it is given to him with reference to the act of incarnation, that is to say, the act of assuming our nature. Now,

it is impossible to maintain this, because it has no support from Scripture. The passage in Luke 1:35, has been adduced, but that admits certainly only of one of the two interpretations above given. Either the coming of the Holy Ghost upon the virgin, and the overshadowing of the power of the Highest, refer to the immediate production of the humanity by Divine power, so that for this reason he is called the Son of God, which might be allowed without excluding a higher and more

emphatic reason for the appellation; or it expresses the assumption of human nature through the "power of the Highest," by the Divine nature of Christ, so that "the holy offspring"

should be called "the Son of God," not because a Divine person assumed humanity, but because that Divine person was antecedently the Son of God, and is spoken of as such by the prophets.

The mere act of assuming our nature gives no idea of the relationship of a Son; it is neither a paternal nor a

filial act in any sense, nor expresses any such relation. It was an act of the Son alone; "forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also took part of the same;" and, as his own act, it could never place him in the relation of Son to the Father. It was done, it is true, in pursuance of the will of the Father, who "sent him" on this errand of mercy into the world; but it was still an act done by the Son, and could not lay the foundation of a filial title and character. This hypothesis cannot,

therefore, he supported. If, then, the title "Son of God," as given to our Lord, is not used chiefly, probably not at all, with reference to his miraculous conception; if it is not an appellative of his human nature, occasionally applied to him when Divine acts and relations are spoken of, as any other human appellation, by metonymy, might be applied; if it is not given him simply because of his assuming our nature; if we find it so used, that it can be fully explained by no office with which he is invested and by no event of

his mediatorial undertaking; it then follows, that it is a title characteristic of his mode of existence in the Divine essence and of the relation which exists between the first and second persons in the ever blessed trinity. Nor is it to be regarded as a matter of indifference, whether we admit the eternal filiation of our Lord, provided we acknowledge his Divinity. It is granted, that some divines, truly decided on this point, have rejected the Divine Sonship. But in this they have gone

contrary to the judgment of the Churches of Christ in all ages; and they would certainly have been ranked among heretics in the first and purest times of the primitive Church, as Bishop Bull has largely and most satisfactorily shown in his "Judgment of the Catholic Church;" nor would their professions of faith in the Divinity of Christ have secured them from the suspicion of being allies in some sort of the common enemies of the faith, nor have been sufficient to guard them from the anathemas with

which the fathers so carefully guarded the sacred doctrine of Scripture respecting the person of our Lord. Such theologians have usually rejected the doctrine, too, on dangerous grounds, and have resorted to modes of interpretation, so forced and unwarrantable, that, if turned against the doctrines which they themselves hold sacred, would tend greatly to unsettle them. In these respects they have often adopted the same modes of attack, and objections of the same character, as

those which Arians and Socinians have wielded against the doctrine of the trinity itself, and have thus placed themselves in suspicious company and circumstances. The very allegation that the Divine Sonship of Christ is a mere speculation, of no importance, provided his Divinity be held, is itself calculated to awaken vigilance, since the most important doctrines have sometimes been stolen away "while men have slept," and the plea which has lulled them into security has always been,

that they were not fundamental. I would not, indeed, say that the doctrine in question is fundamental. I am not indisposed to give up that point with Episcopius and Waterland, who both admitted the Divine Sonship, though I would not concede its fundamental character on the same grounds as the former, but with the caution of the latter, who had views much more correct on the question of fundamental truths. But, though the Sonship of Christ may be denied by

some who hold his Divinity, they do not carry out their own views into their logical conclusions, or it would appear that their notions of the trinity greatly differ, in consequence, from those which are held by the believers in this doctrine; and that on a point, confessedly fundamental, they are, in some important respects, at issue with the orthodox of all ages. This alone demands their serious reflection, and ought to induce caution; but other considerations are not wanting to show

that points of great moment are involved in the denial or maintenance of the doctrine in question.

(2) Many interpreters understand by "the power of the highest," which overshadowed the virgin, the second person of the trinity, who then took part of our nature. See Wolfii Cur. in loc. Most of them, however, refer both clauses to the Holy Spirit. But still, if the reason why the "holy thing,"

which was to be born of Mary, derived its special and peculiar sanctity from

the personal union of the Divinity with the manhood, the reason of its being called the Son of God will be found rather in that to which the humanity was thus united than in itself. The remarks of Professor Kidd, in his "Dissertation on the Eternal Sonship of Christ," are also worthy consideration. "Our Lord's human nature had never subsistence by itself." "That nature never had personality of itself." "Hence our Lord is the Son of God, with respect to his Divine nature, which alone was capable of Sonship.

The question to be decided is, what object was termed the Son of God? Was it the human nature considered by itself? This it could not be, seeing that the humanity never existed by itself, without inhering in the Divinity. Was it the humanity and Divinity, when united, which, in consequence of their union, obtained this as a mere appellation? We apprehend that it was not. We conceive, that the peculiarly appropriate name of our Lord's Divine person is Son of God-that his person was not changed

by the assumption of humanity, and that it is his eternal person, in the complex natures of Divinity and humanity, which is denominated Son of God."

1. The loose and general manner in which many passages of Scripture, which speak of Christ as a Son, must be explained by those who deny the Divine filiation of Christ, seems to sanction principles of interpretation which would be highly dangerous, or rather absolutely fatal, if generally applied to the Scriptures.

2. The denial of the Divine Sonship destroys all relation among the persons of the Godhead; for no other relation of the hypostases are mentioned in Scripture, save those which are expressed by paternity, filiation, and procession; every other relation is merely economical; and these natural relations being removed, we must then conceive of the persons in the Godhead as perfectly independent of each other, a view which has a strong tendency to endanger the unity of the essence. (3)

(3) "According to the opinion of the ancients, which is also the voice of common sense, if there were two unbegotten or independent principles in the Divinity, the consequence would be, that not only the Father would be deprived of his pre-eminence, being of and from himself alone; but also, that there would necessarily be two Gods. On the other hand, supposing the subordination, by which the Father is God of himself, and the Son God of God, the doctors have

thought both the Father's pre-eminence and the Divine monarchy safe." (Bishop Bull.)

"As it is admitted, that there are three persons in the Godhead, these three must exist, either independently of each other, or in related states. If they exist independently of each other, they are, then, each an independent person, and may act independently and separately from the rest; consequently, there would be three independent and

separate Deities existing in the Divine essence" (Kidd.)

The orthodox faith keeps us at the utmost distance from this error. "The Father," says Bishop Bull, "is the principle of the Son and Holy Spirit, and both are propagated from him by an interior production, not an external one. - Hence it is, that they are not only of the Father, but in him, and the Father in them; and that one person cannot be separate from another in the holy trinity, as three human persons, or three other subjects of the

same species are separate. This kind of existing in, if I may so say, our divines call circumincession, because by it some things are very much distinguished from one another without separation; are in, and as it were, penetrate one another, without confusion." (Judgment of the Catholic Church.) 3. It is the doctrine of the Divine paternity only which preserves the Scriptural idea that the Father is the fountain of Deity, and, as such, the fast, the original, the principle. Certainly, he

must have read the Scriptures to little purpose, who does not perceive that this is their constant doctrine-that "of him are all things;" that though the Son is Creator, yet that it was "by the Son"

the Father made the worlds; and that, as to the Son, he himself has declared, "that he lives by the Father," and that the Father hath given him to have life in himself, which can only refer to his Divine nature, nothing being the source of life in itself but what is Divine; a view

which is put out of all doubt by the declaration, that by the gift of the Father, the Son hath life in himself, "as the Father hath life in himself." But where the essential paternity of the Father and the correlative filiation of the Son are denied, these Scriptural representations have no foundation in fact, and are incapable of interpretation. The term Son at once preserves the Scriptural character of the Father, and sets up an everlasting barrier against the Arian heresy of inferiority of essence; for,

as Son, he must be of the same essence as the Father.

4. The Scriptural doctrines of the perfect equality of the Son, so that he is truly God, equal in glory and perfection to the Father, being of the same nature; and, at the same time, the subordination of the Son to the Father, so that he should be capable of being "sent" are only to be equally maintained by the doctrine of the Divine Sonship. - According to those who deny this doctrine, the Son might as well be the fast as the

second person in the Godhead; and the Father the second as well as the first. The Father might have been sent by the Son, without incongruity; or either of them by the Holy Spirit. On the same ground, the order of the solemn Christian form of blessing, in the name of the Father, Son, and Spirit, so often introduced in the New Testament, is grounded on no reason whatever, and might be altered at pleasure. These are most violent and repulsive conclusions, which the doctrine of the

Sonship avoids, and thus proves its accordance with the Holy Scriptures.

5. The love of the Father, in the gift of his Son, a doctrine so emphatically and so frequently insisted upon in Scripture, can have no place at all in the religious system of those who deny the relations of Father and Son to exist in the Godhead. This I take to be fatal to the doctrine; for it insensibly runs into the Socinian heresy, and restricts the love of the Father, in the gift of his Son, to the gift of a man

only, if the Sonship of Christ be human only; and, in that case, the permission of the sufferings of. Christ was no greater a manifestation of God's love to the world than his permitting any other good man to die for the benefit of his fellow creatures, - St. Paul, for instance, or any of the martyrs. Episcopius, though he contends against the doctrine of the Divine Son-ship of our Lord being considered as fundamental, yet argues the truth of the doctrine on this very ground.

"We have thus far adduced those passages of Scripture from which we believe it evident, that something more is ascribed to Jesus Christ than can possibly belong to him under the consideration of man born of a virgin; nay, something is attributed to him which not obscurely argues, that, before he was born of the virgin, he had been, (fuisse afque extitisse,) and had existed as the Son of God the Father. The reasons derived from Scripture which seem to demonstrate this are the following:-

"First, from John 5:18, and 10:33, it is apparent, that Jesus Christ had spoken in such a manner to the Jews, that they either understood or believed that nothing less than this was spoken by Christ, that he attributed to himself something greater than could be attributed to a human being," &c.

After proceeding to elucidate these two passage? at some length, Episcopius adds,

"The second reason is, it is certain the charity and love of God is amazingly

elevated and extolled, by which he sent his own and only-begotten Son into the world, and thus gave him up, even to the death of the cross, to save sinners, who are the sons of God's wrath. - (John 3:16; Rom. 5:10, and 8:32; 1 John 4:9, 10.) But if the only-, begotten Son of God has no signification except Jesus with regard to his humanity and his being born of a virgin, the reason is not so apparent why this love should be so amazingly enhanced, as it is when God's only-begotten Son signifies the

Son who was begotten of the Father before all ages. For that Son, who was born of the Virgin Mary, was born of her for this very purpose-that he might be delivered to death for sinners. But what pre-eminence of love is there in the fact of God delivering this, his Son, to death, whom it was his will to be born of Mary, and to be conceived of his Holy Spirit, with the intention that he should die for sinners? But if you form a conception of the Son of God, who was begotten of his Father before (ante

secula) all worlds; whom it was not compulsory to send into the world, and who was under no obligation to become man; whose dignity was greater than allowed him to be involuntarily sent or to come into flesh, much less that he should be delivered to death; nay, who, as the only-begotten and sole Son, appeared dearer to the Father than to be thrust out from him into this misery. When you have formed this conception in your mind, then will the splendor and glory of the Divine charity and love

toward the human race shine forth with the greater intensity." (Epis. copii Inst. Theol.)

To the doctrine of our Lord's eternal Sonship some objections have been made, drawn from the supposed reason and nature of things; but they admit of an easy answer. The first is, "If the Son be of the Father in any way whatsoever, there must have been a commencement of his existence." To this objection the following is a satisfactory answer:-

"As sure, they are ready to argue, as every effect is posterior to its cause, so must Christ have been posterior to that God of whom he is the effect, or emanation, or offspring, or Son, or image, or by whatever other name you please to call him. Hence a Socinian writer says, 'The invention of men has been long enough upon the rack to prove, in opposition to common sense and reason, that an effect may be co-eternal with the unoriginate cause that produced it. But the proposition has mystery

and falsehood written in its forehead, and is only fit to be joined with transubstantiation, and other mysteries of the same nature.' If these terms are properly taken, it will be found, that though every effect may be said to be posterior to its cause, it is merely in the order of nature, and not of time; and, in point of fact, every effect, properly so called, is co-existent with its cause, and must, of necessity, exactly answer to it, both in magnitude and duration; so that an actually infinite and eternal cause implies

an actually infinite and eternal effect.

"Many seem to imagine, as the words, cause and effect, must be placed one after the other, and the thing intended by the latter is different from what is meant by the former, that, therefore, a cause must precede its effect, at least some very short time. But they ought to consider, that if anything be a cause, it is a cause. It cannot be a cause and the cause of nothing; no, not for the least conceivable space of time. Whatever effect it

may produce hereafter, it is not the actual cause of it till it is actually in being; nor can it be in the very nature of things.

"Now, suppose I should call the Son of God the infinite and eternal effect of an infinite and eternal cause; however the terms of the pro-position might be caviled with, and however sophistry avail itself of the imperfection of human language and the ambiguity of words to puzzle the subject, in the sense in which I take the terms, cause and effect, the

proposition is true, and cannot be successfully controverted. And though I would by no means affect such language, yet I should be justified in its use by the early orthodox writers of the Church, both Greek and Latin, (4) who do not hesitate to call the Father the cause of the Son; though the Latins generally preferred using the term principium, which, in such a connection, is of the same import as cause.

Nor can we consider the following words of our blessed Redeemer in any

other view: ' I live by the Father,' John 6:57, and 'As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself,' John 5:26. Such language can never be understood of the mere humanity of Christ. When the early ecclesiastical writers used the terms in question, it was not with the most distant intention of intimating any inferiority of nature in the Son. And when they called him l God of God,' they never meant to represent him as a creature. Therefore, it was added to

the expression, in the Nicene Creed, 'Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance,' or nature, with the Father and the Maker of all things.' They neither confound the persons, nor divide the substance of the Godhead. And we shall soon see that, in this, they followed the obvious and undoubted meaning of the word of God. They made use of the very best terms they could find in human language, to explain the truth of God, in a most important article of faith, and to defend it

against the insidious attacks of heresy. An if those who affect to despise them would study their writings with candor, they would find that, though they were men, and as such liable to err, they were great men, and men who thought as well as wrote; who thought deeply on the things of God, and did not speak at random.

(4) See Bull's Defensio Fidei Nicaenae, and the notes of Bishop Pearson s most excellent work on the Creed.

"Some persons think they reduce the doctrine, in question, to an absurdity, by saying, ' If the Father generate the Son, he must either be always generating him, or an instant must be supposed when his gene ration was completed. On the former supposition, the Son is and must ever remain imperfect, and, in fact, ungenerated; on the latter, we must allow that he cannot be eternal.' No one can talk in this manner who has not first confounded time with eternity, the creature with the Creator; beings whose

existence, and modes, and relations are swallowed up and lost in the Divine eternity and immensity with him who is, in all essential respects, eternal and infinite. The orthodox maintain that the Son of God is what he is from everlasting, as well as the Father. His generation no more took place in any imaginary point of eternity than it took place in time.

Indeed all duration, which is commenced, is time, and time it must ever remain. Though it may never end, it can never be actual

eternity; nor can any being, whose existence has commenced, ever become actually eternal. The thing implies a contradiction in terms.

"The nature of God is perfect from everlasting; and the generation of the Son of God was no voluntary and successive act of God, but something essential to the Godhead, and therefore natural and eternal. We may illustrate this great subject, though we can never fully comprehend it. All natural agents, as we call them, act

or operate uniformly and necessarily. If they should change their action or operation, we should immediately infer a change of their nature. For their existence, in a certain state, implies that action or operation. They act or operate by, what we call, a necessity of nature, or, as any plain uneducated man would express himself, it is their nature so to do. Thus the fountain flows. Thus the sun shines. Thus the mirror reflects whatever is before it. No sooner did the fountain exist, in its natural state, than it

flowed. No sooner did the sun exist, in its natural state, than it shone. No sooner did the mirror exist, in its natural state, than it reflected the forms placed before it. These actions or operations are all-successive, and are measured by time, because the things from whence they result exist in time, and their existence is necessarily successive. But had the fountain existed from everlasting, in its natural state, from everlasting it must have flowed. Had the sun so existed, so it must have

shone. Had the mirror so existed, so it must have reflected whatever was before it. The Son of God is no voluntary effect of the Father's power and wisdom, like the created universe, which once did not exist, and might never have existed, and must, necessarily, be ever confined within the bounds of time and space: he is the natural and necessary, and therefore the eternal and infinite birth of the Divine fecundity, the boundless overflow of the eternal fountain of all existence and perfection, die infinite

splendor of the eternal sun, the unspotted mirror and complete and adequate image, in whom may be seen all the fullness of the Godhead. This places the orthodox faith at an equal distance from the Sabellian and Arian heresies, and will ever make that distance absolutely infinite. This is no figure of speech, but a most sober truth." (France's Three Discourses on the Person of Christ.)

In the eloquent and forcible passage just quoted, the opposition between a necessary and a

voluntary effect is to be understood of arbitrary will; for, otherwise, the ancients scrupled not to say, that the generation of the Son was with the will of the Father; some, that he could not but eternally will it, as being eternally good; others, that, since the will of God is God himself, as much as the wisdom of God is God himself, whatever is the fruit and product of God, is the fruit and product of his will, wisdom, &c; and so the Son, being the perfect image of the Father, is substance of substance, wisdom of

wisdom, will of will, as he is light of light, and God of God, which is St. Austin's doctrine. That the generation of the Son may be by necessity of nature, without excluding the concurrence or approbation of the will, in the sense of consent, approbation, and acquiescence, is shown by Dr. Waterland, in his "Defence of Queries," and to that the reader who is curious in such distinctions is referred. They are distinctions, however, the subtlety of which will often be differently apprehended

by different minds, and they are, therefore, scarcely allowable, except when used defensively, and to silence an opposer who resorts to subtleties for the propagation of error. The sure rock is the testimony of God, which admits of no other consistent interpretation than that above given. This being established, the incomprehensible and mysterious considerations, connected with the doctrine, must be left among those deep things of God which, in the present state at least, we are not

able to search and fathom. For this reason, the attempts which have been made to indicate, though faintly, the manner of the generation of the Son are not to be commended. Some of the Platonizing fathers taught, that the existence of the Son flowed necessarily from the Divine intellect exerted on itself. The schoolmen agitated the question, whether the Divine generation was effected by intellect or by will. The Father begetting a Son, the exact counterpart and equal of himself, by contemplating and exerting

his intelligence upon himself, is the view advocated by some divines, both of the Romish and Protestant communions. Analogies have also been framed between the generation of the Son by the Father and the mind's generation of a conception of itself in thought.

Some of these speculations are almost obsolete; others continue to this day. It ought, however, to be observed, that they are wholly unconnected with the fact, as it is stated, authoritatively and

doctrinally stated, in Scripture. These are atmospheric halos about the sun of revelation, which, in truth, are the product of a lower region, though they may seem to surround the orb itself. Of these notions Zanchius has well observed, "As we have no proof of these from the word of God, we must reject them as rash and vain, that is, if the thing be positively asserted so to be." Indeed, we may ask, with the prophet, "Who shall disclose his GENERATION?" On this subject, Cyril of Jerusalem

wisely says, "Believe, indeed, that God has a Son; but to know how this is possible be not curious. For if thou searchest, thou shalt not find. Therefore, elevate not thyself, in the attempt,) lest thou fall. Be careful to understand those things alone which are delivered to thee as commands. First, declare to me who is the Father, and then thou wilt acknowledge the Son. but if thou canst not ascertain (cognoscere) the nature of the Father, display no curiosity about knowing the mode of the Son. With regard to thyself, it is

sufficient for all the purposes of godliness to know, that God has one only Son."

Proved then, as I think it irrefragably is, by Scripture testimony, that the title "Son of God" contains a revelation of the Divinity of our Lord, as a person of the same nature and essence with the Father, we may proceed to another of the most emphatic and celebrated appellations of our blessed Savior - "the word."

Under this title our Savior is abruptly announced in

the introduction to St. John's Gospel, for that he is intended cannot be a matter of doubt. In the 5th verse, "the Word" is called "the Light." In verse 7, John Baptist is said to bear witness of that "Light." Again, in verse 14, the Word is said to have been made flesh, and to have dwelt among us; and, in verse 15, that "John bears witness of him." "The Word" and "the Light," to whom John bears witness, are names, therefore, of the same Being; and that Being is, in verse 17, declared to be Jesus Christ. (5) (5) "Per

tos logosov Aoyov intelligi Christum, caret dubio, Nam v. 6, 7, Scriptor dicit, Joannem Baptistam dehoc logos testimonium dixisse; constat autem eum de Christo dixisse testimonium; et v. 14, sequiter, logos hominem esse factum, et Apostolos hujus logos, hominis facti, vidisse dignitatem; atqui Christi majesta tern quotidie oculis videbant." (Rosenmuller.) The manner in which St. John commences his Gospel is strikingly different from the introductions to the histories of Christ by the

other evangelists; and no less striking and peculiar is the title under which he announces him - "the word." It has, therefore, been a subject of much inquiry and discussion, from whence this evangelist drew the use of this appellation, and what reasons led him, as though intending to solicit particular attention, to place it at the very head of his Gospel. That it was for the purpose of establishing an express opinion, as to the personal character of him whom it is used to designate, is made more

than probable from the predominant character of the whole Gospel, which is more copiously doctrinal, and contains a record more full of what Jesus "said" as well as "did" than the others.

As to the source from which the term "logos" was drawn by the apostles, some have held it to be taken from the Jewish Scriptures: others, from the Chaldee paraphrases; others from Philo and the Hellenizing Jews. The most natural conclusion certainly appears to be,

that, as St. John was a plain, "unlearned" man, chiefly conversant in the Holy Scriptures, he derived this term from the sacred books of his own nation, in which the Hebrew phrase Dabar Jehovah, the Word of Jehovah, frequently occurs in passages which must be understood to speak of a personal Word, and which phrase is rendered logos kurios by the Septuagint interpreters. Certainly, there is not the least evidence in his writings, or in his traditional history, that he ever acquainted himself

with Philo or with Plato; and none, therefore, that he borrowed the term from them, or used it in any sense approaching to or suggested by these refinements:- In the writings of St. Paul there are allusions to poets and philosophers; in those of St. John, none. We have already seen that the Hebrew Scriptures contain frequent intimations of a distinction of persons in the Godhead: that one of these Divine persons is called JEHOVAH; and though manifestly represented as existing

distinct from the Father, is yet arrayed with attributes of Divinity, and was acknowledged by the ancient Jews to be, in the highest sense, "their God" the God with whom, through all their history, they chiefly "had to do" This Divine person we have already proved to have been spoken of by the prophets as the future Christ; we have shown, too, that the evangelists and apostles represent Jesus as that Divine person of the prophets; and, if in the writings of the Old Testament, he is also called

"the word," the application of this term to our Lord is naturally accounted for. It will then appear to be a theological, not a philosophic appellation, and one which, previously even to the time of the apostle, had been stamped with the authority of inspiration. It is not, indeed, frequently used in the Old Testament, which may account for its not being adopted as a prominent title of Christ by the other evangelists and apostles; but that, notwithstanding this infrequency, it is thus used

by St. John has a sufficient reason, which shall be presently adduced.

In Genesis 15:1, we are told, that "the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward." Here the word of the Lord is the speaker - "the Word came, saying:" a mere word may be spoken or said; but a personal Word only can say, "I am thy shield." The pronoun refers to the whole phrase, "the Word of Jehovah;" and if a personal Word be

not understood, no person at all is mentioned by whom this message is conveyed, and whom Abram, in reply, invokes as "lord God." The same construction is seen in Psalm 18:30, "The Word of the Lord is tried; he is a buckler to all that trust in him."

Here the pronouns refer to "the word of the Lord," in the first clause; nor is there anything in the context to lead us to consider the Word mentioned to be a grammatical word, a verbal communication of the will

of another, in opposition to a personal Word. This passage is, indeed, less capable of being explained, on the supposition of an ellipsis, than that in Genesis. In this personal sense, also, 1 Sam. 3:21, can only be naturally interpreted. "And the Lord appeared again in Shiloh; for the Lord revealed (showed) himself to Samuel in Shiloh, by the word of the lord." Here it is first declared, that the Lord appeared; then follows the manner of his appearance, or manifestation, "by the Word of the Lord." In what

manner could he appear, except by his personal Word in vision? Again, a comparison of two passages will make it probable, that the personal word is intended in some passages, and was so understood by the ancient Jews, where there are no marked circumstances of construction to call our attention to it. In 2 Sam. 7:21, we find, "For thy word's sake, and according to thine own heart, hast thou done all these things." But in the parallel passage in 1 Chron. 17:19, it is read, "O Lord, for thy servant's

sake, and according to thine own heart, hast thou done all this greatness." Servant is unquestionably an Old Testament appellation of Messiah; and not a few passages might be adduced, where the phrases

"for thy servant's sake," "for thy name's sake," indicate a mediatorial character vested in some exalted and Divine personage. The comparison of these two passages, however, is sufficient to show, that a personal character is given to the

Word mentioned in the former.

All that has been said by opposing criticism, upon these and a few other passages in which the phrase occurs, amounts to no more than that they may be otherwise interpreted, by considering them as elliptical expressions. The sense above given is, however, the natural and obvious one; and if it also accounts better for the frequent use of the terms "Word," "Word of the Lord,"

among the ancient Jewish writers, this is an additional reason why it should be preferred. The Targumists use it with great frequency; and should we even suppose Philo and the Hellenistic Jews to have adopted the term Logos from Plato and the Greeks, yet the favoritism of that term, so to speak, and the higher attributes of glory and Divinity with which they invest their Logos, is best accounted for by the correspondence of this term with one which they had found before, not only

among their own interpreters, but in the sacred writings themselves.

Reference has been made to the Targums, and they are in farther evidence of the theological origin of this appellation. The Targums, or Chaldee paraphrases of the Old Testament, were composed for the use of the common people among the Jews, who, after their return from captivity, did not understand the original Hebrew. They were read in the synagogues every Sabbath day, and with the

phrases they contain all Jews would, of course, be familiar. Now, in such of these paraphrases as are extant, so frequently does the phrase "the Word of Jehovah"

occur, that in almost every place where Jehovah is mentioned in the Old Testament as holding any intercourse with men, this circumlocution is used. "The Lord created man in his own image,"

is, in the Jerusalem Targum, "The Word of Jehovah created man." "Adam and Eve heard the

voice of the Lord God," is paraphrased, "they heard the voice of the Word of the Lord God."

"The Lord thy God, he it is that goeth before thee," is in the Targum, "Jehovah thy God, his Word goeth before thee." The Targumists read, for "I am thy shield," Gen. 15:1, "My Word is thy shield;" for "Israel shall be saved in the Lord," Isa. 45:17, "by the Word of the Lord;" for "I am with thee," Jer. 1:8, "My Word is with thee;" and in Psalm 110:1, instead of "the Lord said unto my

Lord," they read, "the Lord said unto his Word;" and so in a great number of places.

The Socinian answer is, that this is an idiom of the Chaldee language, and that "the word of a person is merely synonymous to himself." It must certainly be allowed that the Memra of the Chaldee paraphrasts has not in every case a personal sense, nor, indeed, has Logos, or Word by which it may be translated; but, as the latter is capable of being used in a personal sense, so

is the former; and, if passages can be found in the Targums where it is evident that it is used personally and as distinct from God the Father, and cannot, without absurdity, be supposed to be used otherwise, the objection is fully invalidated. This has, I think, been very satisfactorily proved. So in one of the above instances, "They heard the voice of the Word of the Lord God walking in the garden." Here walking is undoubtedly the attribute of a person, and not of a mere voice; and that the

person referred to is not the Father, appears from the author, Tzeror Hammor, who makes this observation on the place, "Before they sinned, they saw the glory of the blessed God speaking with him, that is, with God; but after their sin they only heard the voice walking." A trifling remark; but sufficient to show that the Jewish expositors considered the voice as a distinct person from God.

The words of Elijah, 1 Kings 18:24, "I will call on the name of the Lord," &c,

are thus paraphrased by Jonathan: "I will pray in the name of the Lord, and he shall send his Word." The paraphrast could not refer to any message from God; for it was not an answer by word, but by fire, that Elijah expected. It has never been pretended, either by Socinians, or by the orthodox, that God the Father is said to be sent. If there be but one Divine person, by whom is he sent?

We learn from Gen. 16:7, &c, that "the Angel of the

Lord found Hagar by a fountain of water;"

that he said, "I will multiply thy seed exceedingly" and that "she called the name of Jehovah that spake to her, Thou God seest me" It is evident that Hagar considered the person who addressed her as Divine. Philo asserts that it was the Word who appeared to her. Jonathan gives the same view. "She confessed before the Lord Jehovah, whose Word had spoken to her." With this the Jerusalem Targum agrees: "She confessed and

prayed to the Word of the Lord who had appeared to her." It is in vain to say, in the Socinian sense, that God himself is here meant. For the paraphrasts must have known, from the text, that the person spoken of is called an angel. If the Father be meant, how is he called an angel?

"They describe the Word as a Mediator. It is said, Deut. 4:7, 'For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for?

Jonathan gives the following paraphrase of the passage: ' God is near in the name of the Word of the Lord.' Again, we find this paraphrase on Hos. 4:9, 'God will receive the prayer of Israel by his Word, and have mercy upon them, and will make them by his Word like a beautiful fig tree/

And on Jer. 29:14, 'I will be sought by you in my Word, and I will be inquired of through you by my Word.' According to the Jerusalem Targum on Gen. 21:33, Abraham at Beersheba

'prayed in the name of the Word of the Lord, the God of the world.' But it is inconceivable that the paraphrasts did not here mean to describe the Word as a Mediator; especially as we know that the ancient Jews, when supplicating God, entreated that he would 'look on the face of his anointed.'

"They speak of atonement as made by this Memra. On Deut.32:43, Jonathan observes, `God will atone by his Word for his land, and for his people, even a

people saved by the Word of the Lord.'

"They describe the Memra as a Redeemer, and sometimes as the Messiah. These words, Gen.

49:18, 'I have waited for thy salvation? are thus paraphrased in the Jerusalem Targum: ' Our father Jacob said thus, My soul expects not the redemption of Gideon the son of Joash, which is a temporary salvation; nor the redemption of Samson, which is a transitory salvation; but the redemption which thou

didst promise should come through thy Memra to thy people. This salvation my soul waits for.' In the blessing of Judah (ver. 10-12) particular mention is made of the King Messiah. It is a striking proof that by the Memra they meant him who was to appear as the Messiah, that in the Targum of Jonathan, verse 18 is thus rendered: ' Our father Jacob said. I do not expect the deliverance of Gideon the son of Joash, which is a temporal salvation; nor that of Samson the son of Manoah, which is a

transient salvation. But I expect the redemption of the Messiah, the Son of David, who shall come to gather to himself the children of Israel.' It is evident that the one paraphrast has copied from the other; and as the one puts Messiah for Memra, it cannot well be denied that they had considered both terms as denoting the same person.

"They describe this Memra as only begotten, and, in this character, as the Creator. That remarkable verse, Gen. 3:22, 'The Lord

God said. Behold, the man is become as one of us,' is paraphrased in a very singular manner: ' The Word of the Lord said, Behold, Adam whom I have created, is the only begotten in the world, as I am the only begotten in the highest heavens.' The language here ascribed to the Memra, with what reference to the text avails not in the present inquiry, is applicable to a person only; and it will not be pretended by our opponents, that it can apply to the Father. The person intended was

believed to be ' the only-begotten Word.' How nearly does this language approach to that of inspiration! ' In the beginning was the Word. All things were made by him. We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,'

John 1:1, 3.

"If, therefore, the paraphrasts describe the Memra as one sent, as a Mediator, as one by whom atonement is made, as a Redeemer and the Messiah, and as only begotten; it is undeniable

that they do not mean God the Father. If, notwithstanding, they ascribe personal and Divine character! to the Word, they must mean a distinct person in the Divine essence." (Jamieson's Vindication.)

The same personality and the same distinction we find in the passage, "God came to Abimelech;"

in the Targum, "his Word came from the face of God to Abimelech." Equally express is the personal distinction in Psalm 90:1, "Jehovah said unto his

Word, Sit thou at my right hand." Here the Word cannot be the Jehovah that speaks, and a person only could sit at his right hand. This passage, too, proves that the ancient Jews applied the term Word to the Messiah: for, as we may learn from our Lord's conversation with the Pharisees, it was a received opinion that this passage was spoken of the Messiah.

Now, as some of the Targums still extant are older than the Christian era, and contain the interpretations of

preceding paraphrases now lost; and as there is so constant an agreement among them in the use of this phrase, we can be at no loss to discover the source whence St.

John derived the appellative Logos. He had found it in the Hebrew Scriptures, and he had heard it, in the Chaldee paraphrases, read in the synagogues, by which it was made familiar to every Jew. Dr. P. Smith, in his Scripture Testimony, hesitates as to the personal sense of the Memra of the

Chaldean paraphrasts, and inclines to consider it as used in the sense of a reciprocal pronoun, denoting, in its usual application to the Divine Being, God his very self. On this supposition it is, however, impossible to interpret some of the passages above given. Its primary import, he says,

"is that, whatever it may he, which is the medium of communicating the mind and intentions of one person to another." The Jews of the same age, or a little after, and Philo, he

admits, used the term Word with a personal reference, for such "an extension and reference of the term would flow from the primary signification, a medium of rational communication;" but if Philo and those Jews thus extended the primary meaning of this word, why might not the Chaldee paraphrasts extend it before them? They did not invent the term, and affix to it its primary meaning. They found it in the Chaldee tongue, as we find Word in English; and that they sometimes use it in its

primary sense is no proof at all that they did not use it also in a personal or extended one. That a second Jehovah is mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures, as the medium of communication with men, cannot be denied, and Memra would, therefore, be, according to this explanation of its primary meaning, a most fit term to express his person and office. It is also a strong evidence in favor of the personal sense of this term, that "Maimonides himself, anxious as he was to obscure all those passages

of Scripture that imply a Divine plurality, and to conceal every evidence of the Jews having ever held this doctrine, had not boldness enough to assert, that with the Chaldee interpreters, the Word of God was merely ' synonymous to God' himself. He knew that the Targums afforded such unquestionable evidence of the introduction of a distinct person under this designation, that every one of his countrymen, who was in the least acquainted with them, would give him the lie. Therefore he finds

himself reduced to the miserable shift of pretending that, when the paraphrasts speak of the Word of the Lord, and use this expression where the name of God occurs in the original, they mean to describe a created angel." (6) (6) Et fuit Verbum Domini ad me, &c. Fieri quoque potest meo judicio ut Onkelos per vocem Elohim, Angelum intellexerit, &c. (More Nevochim, par. i, c. 27, p. 33.)

"Upon the whole, then," says Dr. Laurence, "how

are we to determine the sense of this singular phrase? Although we consider it neither as a reciprocal, nor as intended to designate the second person in the trinity, who, becoming incarnate, lived and died for us, (of which, perhaps, the Targumists themselves might have had, at best, but indistinct or even incorrect ideas,) yet may we, most probably, regard it, in its general use, as indicative of a Divine person. That it properly means the Word of the Lord, or his will declared by a verbal

communication, and that it is sometimes literally so taken, cannot be denied, but it seems impossible to consult the numerous passages, where personal characteristics are attributed to it, and to conceive that it does not usually point out a real person. Whether the Targumist contemplated this hypostatical word as a true subsistence in the Divine nature, or as a distinct emanation of Deity, it may be useless to inquire, because we are deficient in data adequate

to a complete decision of the question."

(Dissertation.)

Philo and the philosophic Jews may, therefore, be well spared in the inquiry as to the source from whence St. John derives the appellative Logos. Whether the Logos of Philo be a personified attribute or a person has been much disputed, but is of little consequence on this point. It may, however, be observed, that as the evidence predominates in favor of the personality, of the Logos of Philo, in

numerous passages of his writings,' this will also show, that not only the Jewish writers, who composed the paraphrases, and the common people among the Jews, in consequence of the Targums being read in the synagogues, but also those learned men who addicted themselves to the study of the Greek philosophy, were familiar with the idea of a Logos as a person distinct from God, yet invested with Divine attributes and performing Divine works.

The question as to Philo is not whether he sometimes speaks of a personified Logos, that is, of an attribute or conception of God, arrayed in poetic, personal properties: this is granted; but whether he also speaks of a Logos, who is a real and a Divine person. Now, when he calls this Logos God, a second God, the Son of God, the first begotten, the beloved Son; speaks of him as superior to angels, as the Creator of the world, as seeing all things, as the Governor and Sustainer, as a Messenger, as the

Shepherd of the flock; of men being freed from their sins by him, as the true High Priest, as a Mediator, and in other similar and personal terms, which may all be verified by consulting his writings, or the selections given in Kidd's Demonstration, Allix's Judgment, Bryant's Philo, Laurence's Dissertation, and other works; he cannot, by any possibility of construction, be supposed to personify the mere attribute of the reason or wisdom of God, or any conception and operation of the Divine

intellect. This may be the only Logos of Plato; for, though the Christianized Platonists, of a lower period, used this term in a personal sense, there is but slender evidence to conclude that Plato used it as the name of a person distinct from God.

Certain it is, that the Logos of Philo is arrayed in personal characters which are not found in the writings of Plato; a fact which will with great difficulty be accounted for, upon the supposition that the Jewish philosopher

borrowed his notions from the Greek. Philo says, that "the Father has bestowed upon this Prince of angels his most ancient Logos, that he should stand as a Mediator, to judge between the creature and the Creator. He, therefore, intercedes with him, who is immortal, in behalf of mortals; and, on the other hand, he acts the part of an ambassador, being sent from the supreme King to his subjects. And this gift he so willingly accepts, as to glory in it, saying, I have stood between God and you, being neither

unbegotten as God, nor begotten like mortals, but one in the middle, between two extremes, acting the part of a hostage with both; with the Creator, as a pledge that he will never be provoked to destroy or desert the world, so as to suffer it to run into confusion; and, with creatures, to give them this certain hope, that God, being reconciled, will never cease to take care of his own workmanship. For I proclaim peace to the creation from that God who removes war and introduces and preserves

peace forever." Now, when he expresses himself in this manner, who can reconcile this to a mere personification from the Greek philosophy? or suppose that Philo obtained from that ideas so evangelical, that, were there not good evidence that he was not acquainted with Christianity we should rather conceive of him as of "a scribe," so far as this passage goes, "well instructed" in the kingdom of heaven?

Even Dr. Priestley acknowledges that Philo

"made a much more substantial personification of the Logos than any of the proper Platonists had done." (Early Opinions.) Substantial, indeed, it is; for, although, in some passages, in the vigor of his discursive and allegorizing genius, "he enshrines his Logos behind such a veil of fancy, that we can scarcely discern his person in the sanctuary," yet in the above, and many other passages, "he draws aside the veil and shows him to us in his full proportions." (Whitaker's Origin of Arianism.) For what

conceivable attribute of Deity, or ideal thing whatever, could any writer, allegorist as he might be, not insanely raving, call "Prince of angels," "Mediator," "Intercessor," "neither unbegotten as God, nor begotten like mortals," "an Ambassador" sent from God to men, interposing between an offended God to restrain his anger and to give "peace" to the world? Who could speak of these attributes or idealities in language anticipatory of an incarnation, as "a man of God, immortal and

incorruptible," as "the man after the image of God," or ascribe to him a name "unspeakable and incomprehensible," and affirm that he is a "fabricator," or Creator, and "Divine, who will lie up close to the Father," exactly where St. John places him "in the very bosom of the Father." For, however mysteriously Philo speaks in other passages, he says nothing to contradict these, and they must be taken as they are. They express a real personality, and they show, at the same time, that they could not be

borrowed from Plato. It is not necessary to enter into the question, whether that philosopher ascribed a real personality to his Logos or not. If he gives him a real and Divine personality, then the inference will be, that he derived his notion from the Jews, or from ancient patriarchal tradition; and it would be most natural for Philo, finding a personal and Divine Logos in Plato, to enlarge the scanty conceptions of the philosopher from the theology of his own country. On the other

hand, if we suppose the Logos of Plato to be a mere personification, either Philo must have improved it into a real person, consistent with his own religion; or, sometimes philosophizing on a mere personified Logos, and sometimes introducing the personal Logos of his own nation and native schools, we have the key to all those passages which would appear inconsistent with each other, if interpreted only of one and the same subject, and if he were regarded as speaking exclusively either of a

personified or a real Logos. "From all the circumstances it seems to be the most reasonable conclusion, that the leading acceptation of the Memra or Logos among the Jews of this middle age was to designate an intermediate agent; that, in the sense of a Mediator, between God and man, it became a recognized appellation of the Messiah; that the personal doctrine of the word was the one generally received, and that the conceptual notion which Philo interweaves with the other was purely his own

invention, the result of his theological philosophy." (Dr. Smith's Person of Christ.) As the doctrine of a personal Logos was not derived by Philo from Platonism, so his own writings, as decidedly as the reason of the case itself, will show, that the source from which he did derive it was the Scriptures and the Chaldee paraphrases, or, in other words, the established theology of his nation. Philo had not suffered the doctrine of the Hebrew Scriptures, of a Jehovah acting in the name and under the commission

of another Jehovah as well as his own, to go unnoticed The passages of the Old Testament, in which a personal Word, the Dabar Jehovah, occurs, had not been overlooked, nor the more frequent use of an equivalent phrase in the Memra of the paraphrasts. "There is a time," he observes, "when he (the holy Logos) inquires of some, as of Adam, Where art thou?" exactly corresponding with the oldest Targumists, "THE word of the Lord called to Adam." Again, with reference to Abraham and

Lot, - "of whom (the Logos) it is said the sun came out upon the earth, and Lot entered into Sijor, and the Lord rained brimstone and fire upon Sodom and Gomorrah. For the Logos of God, when he comes out to our earthly system, assists, and helps those who are related to virtue," &c. So by Onkelos and Jonathan, the appearances of God to Abram are said to be appearances of the Word, and twice in the fifteenth chapter of Genesis, "the Word of the Lord" is said to come to Abraham. The Being who

appeared to Hagar, of whom she said, "Thou God seest me," Philo also calls the Logos. The Jehovah who stood above the ladder of Jacob and said, "I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father," has the same appellation, and he who spake to Moses from the bush. It is thus that Philo accords with the most ancient of the interpreters of his nation in giving the title Memra, Logos, or Word, to the ostensible Deity of the Jewish dispensation, in which, too, they were authorized by the use of the same term, in the

same application, by the sacred writers themselves. Why, then, resort to Plato, when the source of the Logos of Philo is so plainly indicated? and why suppose St. John to have borrowed from Philo, when the Logos was an established form of theological speech, and when the sources from which Philo derived it, the Scriptures and the paraphrases, were as accessible to the apostle as to the philosophical Jew of Alexandria?

As Philo mingled Platonic speculations with his discourses on the real Logos of his national faith, without, however, giving up personality and Divinity; so the Jews of his own age mingled various crude and darkening comments with the same ancient faith drawn from the Scriptures, and transmitted with the purer parts of their tradition. The paraphrases and writings of Philo remain, however, a striking monument of the existence of opinions as to a distinction of persons in the Godhead, and the

Divine character of a Mediator and interposing agent between God and man, as indicated in their Scriptures, and preserved by their theologians.

Celebrated as this title of the Logos was in the Jewish theology, it is not, however, the appellation by which the Spirit of inspiration has chosen that our Savior should be principally designated. It occurs but a very few times, and principally and emphatically in the introduction to St. John's Gospel. A cogent reason

can be given why this apostle adopts it, and we are not without a probable reason why, in the New Testament, the title Son of God should have been preferred, which is, likewise, a frequent title of the Logos in the writings also of Philo.

"Originating from the spiritual principle of connection, between the first and the second Being in the Godhead; marking this, by a spiritual idea of connection; and considering it to be as close and as necessary as the

Word is to the energetic mind of God, which cannot bury its intellectual energies in silence, but must put them forth in speech; it is too spiritual in itself to be addressed to the faith of the multitude. If with so full a reference to our bodily ideas, and so positive & filiation of the second Being to the first, we have seen the grossness of Arian criticism, endeavoring to resolve the doctrine into the mere dust of a figure; how much more ready would it have been to do so, if we had only such a spiritual denomination as

this for the second? This would certainly have been considered by it as too unsubstantial for distinct personality, and therefore too evanescent for equal Divinity." (Whitaker's Origin of Arianism.) Of the reason of its occasional use by St. John, a satisfactory account may also be given. The following is a clear abridgment of the ampler discussions on this subject which have employed many learned writers.

"Not long after the writings of Philo were published, there arose the Gnostics, a

sect, or rather a multitude of sects, who having learnt in the same Alexandrian school to blend the principles of oriental philosophy with the doctrine of Plato, formed a system most repugnant to the simplicity of Christian faith. It is this system which Paul so often attacks under the name of' false philosophy, strife of words, endless genealogies, science, falsely so called.' The foundation of the Gnostic system was the intrinsic and incorrigible depravity of matter. Upon this principle they made a

total separation between the spiritual and the material world. Accounting it impossible to educe out of matter anything which was good, they held that the Supreme Being, who presided over the innumerable spirits that were emanations from himself, did not make this earth, but that a spirit of an inferior nature, very far removed in character as well as in rank from the Supreme Being, formed matter into that order which constitutes the world, and gave life to the different creatures that

inhabit the earth. They held that this inferior spirit was the ruler of the creatures whom he had made, and they considered men, whose souls he imprisoned in earthly tabernacles, as experiencing under his dominion the misery which necessarily arose from their connection with matter, and as estranged from the knowledge of the true God. Most of the later sects of the Gnostics rejected every part of the Jewish law, because the books of Moses gave a view of the creation inconsistent

with their system. But some of the earlier sects, consisting of Alexandrian Jews, incorporated a respect for the law with the principles of their system. They considered the Old Testament dispensation as granted by the Demiurgus, the maker and ruler of the world, who was incapable from his want of power, of delivering those who received it from the thraldom of matter: and they looked for a more glorious messenger, whom the compassion of the Supreme Being was to send for the purpose of

emancipating the human race. Those Gnostics who embraced Christianity, regarded the Christ as this Messenger, an exalted AEon, who, being in some manner united to the man Jesus, put an end to the dominion of the Demiurgus, and restored the souls of men to communion with God. It was natural for the Christian Gnostics who had received a Jewish education to follow the steps of Philo, and the general sense of their countrymen, in giving the name Logos to the

Demiurgus. And as Christos was understood from the beginning of our Lord's ministry to be the Greek word equivalent to the Jewish name Messiah, there came to be, in their system, a direct opposition between Christos and Logos. The Logos was the maker of the world: Christos was the AEon sent to destroy the tyranny of the Logos.

"One of the first teachers of this system was Cerinthus. We have not any particular account of all the branches of his system; and it is

possible that we may ascribe to him some of those tenets by which later sects of Gnostics were discriminated. But we have authority for saying that the general principle of the Gnostic scheme was openly taught by Cerinthus before the publication of the Gospel of John. The authority is that of Irenseus, a bishop who lived in the second century, who in his youth had heard Polycarp, the disciple of the Apostle John, and who retained the discourses of Polycarp in his memory till his death. There are yet

extant of the works of Irenseus, five books which he wrote against heresies, one of the most authentic and valuable monuments of theological erudition. In one place of that work he says, that Cerinthus taught in Asia that the world was not made by the supreme God, but by a certain power very separate and far removed from the Sovereign of the universe, and ignorant of his nature. (Iren. contra Haer. lib. iii, cap. xi, 1.) In another place he says, that John the apostle wished, by his Gospel, to extirpate the

error which had been spread among men by Cerinthus; (Iren. contra Haer. lib. i, xxvi, 1;) and Jerome, who lived in the fourth century, says that John wrote his Gospel at the desire of the bishops of Asia, against Cerinthus and other heretics, and chiefly against the doctrines of the Ebionites, then springing up, who said, that Christ did not exist before he was born of Mary. (Jerom. De Vit. Illust. cap. ix.)

"From the laying these accounts together, it appears to have been the

tradition of the Christian Church, that John, who lived to a great age, and who resided at Ephesus, in proconsular Asia, was moved by the growth of the Gnostic heresies, and by the solicitations of the Christian teachers, to bear his testimony to the truth in writing, and particularly to recollect those discourses and actions of our Lord, which might furnish the clearest refutation of the persons who denied his pre-existence. This tradition is a key to a great part of his Gospel. Matthew, Mark,

and Luke, had given a detail of those actions of Jesus which are the evidences of his Divine mission; of those events in his life upon earth which are most interesting to the human race; and of those moral discourses in which the wisdom, the grace, and the sanctity of the Teacher, shine with united luster. Their whole narration implies that Jesus was more than man.

But as it is distinguished by a beautiful simplicity, which adds very much to their credit as historians,

they have not, with the exception of a few incidental expressions, formally stated the conclusion that Jesus was more than man, but have left the Christian world to draw it for themselves from the facts narrated, or to receive it by the teaching and the writings of the apostles. John, who was preserved by God to see this conclusion, which had been drawn by the great body of Christians, and had been established in the epistles, denied by different heretics, brings forward, in the form of a history of

Jesus, a view of his exalted character, and draws our attention particularly to the truth of that which had been denied. When you come to analyze the Gospel of John, you will find that the first eighteen verses contain the positions laid down by the apostle, in order to meet the errors of Cerinthus; that these positions, which are merely affirmed in the introduction, are proved in the progress of the Gospel, by the testimony of John the Baptist, and by the words and the actions of our Lord; and that after the

proof is concluded by the declaration of Thomas, who, upon being convinced that Jesus had risen, said to him, `My Lord, and my God,' John sums up the amount of his Gospel in these few words: `These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God,' i. 6. that Jesus and the Christ are not distinct persons, and that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. The apostle does not condescend to mention the name of Cerinthus, because that would have preserved, as long as the world lasts, the

memory of a name which might otherwise be forgotten. But although there is dignity and propriety in omitting the mention of his name, it was necessary, in laying down the positions that were to meet his errors, to adopt some of his words, because the Christians of those days would not so readily have applied the doctrine of the apostle to the refutation of those heresies which Cerinthus was spreading among them, if they had not found in the exposition of that doctrine some of the terms in which the heresy

was delivered: and as the chief of these terms, Logos, which Cerinthus applied to an inferior spirit, was equivalent to a phrase in common use among the Jews,' the Word of Jehovah,' and was probably borrowed from thence, John by his use of Logos, rescues it from the degraded use of Cerinthus, and restores it to a sense corresponding to the dignity of a Jewish phrase." (Hill's Lectures.) The Logos was no fanciful term, merely invented by St. John, pro re nata, or even suggested by the Holy

Spirit, as a suitable title for a prophet, by whom God chose to reveal himself or his Word. It was a term diversely understood in the world before St. John began his Gospel. Is it possible, therefore, that he should have used the term without some express allusion to these prevailing opinions? Had he contradicted them all, it would, of course, have been a plain proof that they were all equally fabulous and fanciful; but by adopting the term, he certainly meant to show that the error did not consist in

believing that there was a Logos, or Word of God, but in thinking amiss of it. We might, indeed, have wondered much had he decidedly adopted the Platonic or Gnostic notions, in preference to the Jewish; but that he should harmonize with the latter is by no means surprising; first, because he was a Jew himself; and secondly, because Christianity was plainly to be shown to be connected with, and, as it were, regularly to have sprung out of Judaism. It is certainly, then, in the

highest degree consistent with all we could reasonably expect, to find St. John and others of the sacred writers expressing themselves in terms not only familiar to the Jews under the old covenant, but which might tend, by a perfect revelation of the truth, to give instruction to all parties; correcting the errors of the Platonic and oriental systems, and confirming, in the clearest manner, the hopes and expectations of the Jews.

(See Nare's Remarks on the Socinian Version.)

While the reasons for the use of this term by St. John are obvious, the argument from it is irresistible; for, first, the Logos of the evangelist is a person, not an attribute, as many Socinians have said, who have, therefore, sometimes chosen to render it "wisdom." For if an attribute, it were a mere truism to say that it was in the beginning with God, for God could never be without his attributes. The apostle also declares, that the Logos was the Light; but that John Baptist was not the Light. Here is a kind of

parallel supposed, and it presumes, also, that it was possible that the same character might be erroneously ascribed to both.

"Between person and person this may undoubtedly be the case; but what species of parallel can exist between man and an attribute? Nor will the difficulty be obviated by suggesting, that wisdom here means not the attribute itself, but him whom that attribute inspired, the man Jesus Christ, because the name of

our Savior has not yet been mentioned; because that rule of interpretation must be inadmissible, which at one time would explain the term Logos by an attribute, at another by a man, as best suits the convenience of hypothesis; and because, if it be, in this instance, conceived to indicate our Savior, it must follow, that our Savior created the world, (which the Unitarians will by no means admit,) for the Logos, who was that which John the Baptist was not, the true Light, is expressly declared to have made the

world." (Laurence's Dissertation on the Logos.)

Again: the Logos was made flesh, that is, became man; but in what possible sense could an attribute become man? The Logos is "the only begotten of the Father;" but it would be uncouth to say of any attribute, that it is begotten; and, if that were passed over it would follow, from this notion, either that God has only one attribute, or that wisdom is not his only-begotten attribute.

Farther, St. John uses terms decisively personal, as that he is God, not Divine as an attribute, but God person* ally; not that he was in God, which would property have been said of an attribute, but with God, which he could only say of a person: that "all things were made by him;" that he was "in the world;" that "he came to his own;" that he was "in the bosom of the Father;" and that

"he hath declared the Father." The absurdity of representing the Logos of

St. John as an attributive seems, at length, to have been perceived by the Socinians themselves, and their New Version accordingly regards it as a personal term.

If the Logos is a person, then is he Divine; for, first eternity is ascribed to him, "in the beginning was the Word." The Unitarian comment is, "from the beginning of his ministry, or the commencement of the Gospel dispensation;" which makes St. John use another trifling truism, and solemnly tell his readers,

that our Savior, when he began his ministry, was in existence! -

"in the beginning of his ministry the Word was, "It is true that archee the beginning, is used for the beginning of Christ's ministry, when he says that the apostles had been "with him from the beginning;" and it may be used for the beginning of anything whatever. It is a term which must be determined in its meaning by the context; (7) and the question, therefore, is how the connection here

determines it. Almost immediately it is added, "all things were made by him;"

which, in a preceding chapter, has been proved to mean the creation of universal nature. He, then, who made all things was prior to all created things; he was when they began to be, and before they began to be; and, if he existed before all created things, he was not himself created, and was, therefore, eternal. (8) Secondly, he is expressly called God, in the same sense as the Father;

and thirdly, he is as explicitly said to be the Creator of all things. The two last particulars have already been largely established, and nothing need be added, except, as another proof that the Scriptures can only be fairly explained by the doctrine of a distinction of Divine persons in the Godhead, the declaration of St. John may be adduced, that "the Word was with God, and the Word was God." What hypothesis but this goes a single step to explain this wonderful language?

Arianism, which allows the pre-existence of Christ with God, accords with the first clause, but contradicts the second. Sabellianism, which reduces the personal to an official and therefore a temporal, distinction, accords with the second clause, but contradicts the first; for Christ, according to this theory, was not with God in the beginning, that is, in eternity. Socinianism contradicts both clauses; for on that scheme Christ was neither with God "in the beginning," nor was he God. "The faith of God's elect" agrees with both

clauses, and by both it is established,

"The Word was with God, and the Word was God."

(7) "Quotiescunque fit principii mentio, significationem illius ad id de quo ac-commodare necesse est." (Beza.)

(8) "Valde errant, qui en archs interpretantur de initio Evangelic; huic enirn sententiae consilium Joannis, et sequens oratio aperte repugnat. Si vero ho logos fuit jam turn, quum mundus esse caepit, sequiter eum fuisse ante

mundum condi tum; sequitur etiam eum non esse unam ex ceteris creatis rebus, quae turn mundo esse caeperunt, sed alia natura conditione." (Rosenmuller.)

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33 CHRIST POSSESSED OF DIVINE ATTRIBUTES

Having considered the import of some of the titles applied to our Lord in the Scriptures, and proved that they imply Divinity, we may next consider the

attributes which are ascribed to him in the New Testament. If, to names and lofty titles which imply Divinity, we find added attributes never given to creatures, and from which all creatures are excluded, the Deity of Christ is established beyond reasonable controversy. No argument can be more conclusive than this. Of the essence of Deity we know nothing, but that he is a Spirit. He is made known by his attributes: and it is from them that we learn, that there is an essential distinction between him

and his creatures, because he has attributes which they have not, and those which they have in common with him, he possesses in a degree absolutely perfect. From this it follows, that his is a peculiar nature, a nature sui generis, to which no creature does or can possibly approximate.

Should, then, these same attributes be found ascribed to Christ, as explicitly and literally as to the Father, it follows of necessity, that, the attributes being the same,

the essence is the same, and that essence the exclusive nature of the Theotes, or "Godhead." It would, indeed, follow, that if but one of the peculiar attributes of Deity were ascribed to Christ, he must possess the whole, since they cannot exist separately; and whoever is possessed of one must be concluded to be in possession of all. (9) But it is not one attribute only, but all the attributes of Deity which are ascribed to him; and not only those which are moral, and which are, therefore,

capable of being communicated, (though those, as they are attributed to Christ in infinite degree and in absolute perfection, would be sufficient for the argument,) but those which are, on all sides, allowed to be incommunicable, and peculiar to the Godhead.

(9) "Attributa Divina arctissimo copulari vinculo, sic, ut nullum seperatim concipi queat, adeoque qui uno pollet, omnibus ornetur." (Doederlein.)

eternity is ascribed to him. "Unto us a child is born,

unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." "Everlasting Father" is variously rendered by the principal orthodox critics; but every rendering is in consistency with the application of a positive eternity to the Messiah, of which this is allowed to be a prediction. Bishop Lowth says, "the Father of the everlasting age." Bishop Stock, "the Father of

Eternity;" i. e. the owner of it. Dathe and Rosenmuller, "Aeternus" The former considers it an oriental idiom, by which names of affinity, as father, mother, &c, are used to denote the author, or eminent possessor of a quality or object. Rev. 1:17, 18, "I am the first and the last, I am he that liveth and was dead;" so also ch.

2:8; and in both passages the context shows, indisputably, that it is our Lord himself who speaks, and applies these titles to himself. In chap, 22:13,

also, Christ is the speaker, and declares himself to be "alpha and omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." Now, by these very titles is the eternity of God declared, Isaiah 45:6, and 48:10, "I am the first, and I am the last: and beside me there is no God." "Before me was there no God formed, neither shall there be after me." But they are, in the book of Revelation, assumed by Christ as explicitly and absolutely; and they clearly affirm, that the Being to whom they are applied had no

beginning, and will have no end. In Rev. 1:8, after the declaration, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord," it is added, "which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." Some have referred these words to the Father; but certainly without reason, as the very scope of the passage shows. It is Christ who speaks in the first person, throughout the chapter, when the sublime titles of the former part of the verse are used, and indeed, throughout the book; and

to interpret this particular clause of the Father would introduce a most abrupt change of persons, which, but for a false theory, would never have been imagined. The words, indeed, do but express the import of the name Jehovah, so often given to Christ; and as, when the Father is spoken of, in verse 4, the same declaration is made concerning him which, in verse 8, our Lord makes of himself, it follows, that if the terms "which was, and is, and is to come," are descriptive of the eternity

of the Father, they are also descriptive of eternity as an attribute also of the Son. We have a similar declaration in Heb. 13:8, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever," where eternity, and its necessary concomitant, immutability, are both ascribed to him. That the phrase, "yesterday, today, and forever," is equivalent to eternity needs no proof; and that the words are not spoken of the doctrine of Christ, as the Socinians contend, appears from the context, which scarcely

makes any sense upon this hypothesis, (See Macknight,) since a doctrine once delivered must remain what it was at first. This interpretation, also, gives a figurative sense to words which have all the character of a strictly literal declaration; and it is a farther confirmation of the literal sense, and that Christ is spoken of personally, that ho autos is the phrase by which the immutability of the Son is expressed in chapter 1: verse 12: "But thou art ho autos, the same." Peirce, in his

Paraphrase, has well expressed the connection:

"Considering the conclusion of their life and behavior, imitate their faith; for the object of their faith, Jesus Christ, is the same now as he was then, and will be the same forever." A Being essentially unchangeable, and therefore eternal, is the only proper object of an absolute "faith."

A similar and most solemn ascription of eternity and immutability occurs Heb. 1:10-12, "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the

foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the works of thine hands. They shall perish; but thou remainest: and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail." These words are quoted from Psa. 102, which all acknowledge to be a lofty description of the eternity of God. They are here applied to Christ, and of him they affirm, that he was before the material universe-that it was created

by him-that he has absolute; power over it-that he shall destroy it-that he shall do this with infinite ease, as one who folds up a vesture; and that, amid the decays and changes of material things, he remains the same. The immutability here ascribed to Christ is not, however, that of a created spirit, which will remain when the material universe is destroyed; for then there would be nothing proper to Christ in the text, nothing but in which angels and men participate with him, and the words would be

deprived of all meaning. His immutability and duration are peculiar, and a contrast is implied between his existence and that of all created things. They are dependent, he is independent; and his necessary, and therefore eternal, existence must follow. The phrase "eternal life," when used, as it is frequently, in St. John's Epistles, is also a clear designation of the eternity of our Savior.

"For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness,

and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us." In the first clause, Christ is called the Life; he is then said to be "eternal;" and, that no mistake should arise, as though the apostle merely meant to declare that he would continue forever, he shows, that he ascribes eternity to him in his pre-existent state, - "that eternal life" which was with the FATHER; and with him before he was "manifested to men." And eternal pre-existence could not be

more unequivocally marked.

To these essential attributes of Deity, to be without beginning and without change, is added that of being extended through all space. - He is not only eternal, but omnipresent. Thus he declares himself to be at the same time in heaven and upon earth, which is assuredly a property of Deity alone. "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven."

The genuineness of the last clause has been attacked by a few critics; but has been fully established by Dr. Magee. (Magee on the Atonement.) This passage has been defended from the Socinian interpretation already, and contains an unequivocal declaration of ubiquity.

For "where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." How futile is the Socinian comment in the New Version! This promise is to be "limited to the apostolic age." But were

that granted, what would the concession avail? In the apostolic age, the disciples met in the name of their Lord many times in the week, and in innumerable parts of the world at the same time, in Judea, Asia Minor, Europe, &c. He, therefore, who could be "in the midst of them," whenever and wherever they assembled, must be omnipresent. But they add, "by a spiritual presence, a faculty of knowing things in places where he was not present;" "a gift,"they say," given to the apostles occasionally," and refer to 1

Cor. 5:3. No such gift is, however, claimed by the apostle in that passage, who knew the affair in the Church of Corinth, not by any such faculty or revelation, but by "report," verse 1. Nor does he say, that he was present with them, but judged "as though he were present." If, indeed, any such gift were occasionally given to the apostles, it would be, not a "spiritual presence," as the New Version has it; but a figurative presence. No such figurative meaning is however hinted at in the text before us, which is as

literal a declaration of Christ's presence everywhere with his worshippers as that similar promise made by Jehovah to the Israelites: "In all places where I record my name I will come to thee, and I will bless thee." At the very moment, too, of his ascension, that is, just when, as to his bodily presence, he was leaving his disciples, he promises still to be with them, and calls their attention to this promise by an emphatic particle, "And lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world," Matt,

28:20. The Socinians render "to the end of the age," that is, "the Jewish dispensation, till the destruction of Jerusalem." All that can be said in favor of this is, that the words may be so translated, if no regard is paid to their import. But it is certain, that, in several passages, "the end of the world," ho suntelefas to· aio=nos, must be understood in its popular sense. That this is its sense here, appears, first, from the clause "Lo I am with you always," pßsas tßs heemTras, "at all times;" secondly, because

spiritual presence stands, by an evidently implied antithesis, opposed to bodily absence; thirdly, because that presence of Christ was as necessary to his disciples after the destruction of Jerusalem as till that period. But even were the promise to be so restricted, it would still be in proof of the omnipresence of our Lord, for, if he were present with all his disciples in all places, "always," to the destruction of Jerusalem, it could only be by virtue of a property which would render him present to his

disciples in all ages. The Socinian Version intimates, that the presence meant is the gift of miraculous powers. Let even that be allowed, though it is a very partial view of the promise; then, if till the destruction of Jerusalem the apostles were "always," " at all times," able to work miracles, the power to enable them to effect these wonders must "always" and in all places have been present with them; and if that were not a human endowment, if a power superior to that of man were requisite for the

performance of the miracles, and that power was the power of Christ, then he was really, though spiritually, present with them, unless the attribute of power can be separated from its subject, and the power of Christ be where he himself is not. This, however, is a low view of the import of the promise, "Lo I am with you," which, both in the Old and New Testament, signifies to be present with any one, to help, comfort, and succor him. "Einai meta tinos, alicui adesse, juvare aliquem, curare res

alicujus." (Rosenmuller.) It is not necessary to adduce more than another passage in proof of a point so fully determined already by the authority of Scripture. After the apostle, in Col. 1:16, 17, has ascribed the creation of all things in heaven and earth, "visible and invisible," to Christ, he adds, "and by him all things consist." On this passage, Raphelius cites a striking passage from Aristotle, De Mundo, where the same verb, rendered "consist" by our translators, is used in a like sense to express the

constant dependence of all things upon their Creator for continued subsistence and preservation.

"There is a certain ancient tradition common to all mankind, that all things subsist from and by God, and that no kind of being is self-sufficient, when alone, and destitute of his preserving aid."

(1) The apostle then, here, not only attributes the creation, but the conservation of all things to Christ; but to preserve them his presence must be co-extensive with them,

and thus the universe of matter and created spirits, heaven and earth, must be filled with his power and presence. "This short sentence implies that our Lord's presence extends to every part of the creation; to every being and system in the universe; a most striking and emphatical description of the omnipresence of God the Son." (Holders Scripture Testimonies.)

(1) Raphelius in loc. See also Parkhurst's Lex.

To these attributes of essential Divinity is added,

a perfect knowledge of all things. This cannot be the attribute of a creature, for though it maybe difficult to say how far the knowledge of the highest order of intelligent creatures may be extended, yet are there two kinds of knowledge which God has made peculiar to himself by solemn and exclusive claim. The first is, the perfect knowledge of the thoughts and intents of the heart. "I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins,"

Jeremiah 27:10. "Thou, even thou only," says

Solomon, "knowest the hearts of all the children of men," 1 Kings 8:39. This knowledge is attributed to and was claimed by our Lord, and that without any intimation that it was in consequence of a special revelation, or supernatural gift, as in a few instances we see in the apostles and prophets, bestowed to answer a particular and temporary purpose. In such instances also, it is to be observed, the knowledge of the spirits and thoughts of men was obtained in consequence of a revelation made to them by Him

whose prerogative it is to search the heart. In the case of our Lord, it is, however, not merely said, "And Jesus knew) their thoughts" that he perceived in his spirit, that they so reasoned among themselves; but it is referred to as an attribute or original faculty, and it is, therefore made use of by St. John, on one occasion, to explain his conduct with reference to certain of his enemies:-

"But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, and

needed not that any should testify of man, for he knew what was in man." After his exaltation, also, he claims the prerogative in the full style and majesty of the Jehovah of the Old Testament: "And all the Churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and the heart."

A striking description of the omniscience of Christ is also found in Heb. 4:12, 13, if we understand it, with most of the ancients, of the hypostatic Word; to which sense, I think the scope of the passage and context

clearly determines it. "For the word of God is quick (living) and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart;' neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight; for all things are naked and open to the eyes of him with whom we have to do." The reasons for referring this passage rather to Christ, the author of the Gospel, than to the Gospel itself,

are, first, that it agrees better with the apostle's argument. He is warning Christians against the example of ancient Jewish unbelief, and enforces his warning by reminding them, that the Word-of God discerns the thoughts and intents of the heart. The argument is obvious, if the personal Word is meant; not at all so, if the doctrine of the Gospel be supposed. Secondly, the clauses," neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight," and, all "things are naked and open to the eyes of him,

with whom we have to do," or "to whom we must give an account" are undoubtedly spoken of a person, and that person our witness and judge. Those, therefore, who think that the Gospel is spoken of in verse 12, represent the apostle as making a transition from the Gospel to God himself in what follows.

This, however, produces a violent break in the argument, for which no grammatical nor contextual reason whatever can be given; and it is

evident that the same metaphor extends through both verses. This is taken from the practice of dividing and cutting asunder the bodies of beasts slain for sacrifice, and laying them open for inspection, lest any blemish or unsoundness should lurk within, and render them unfit for the service of God. The dividing asunder of "the joints and marrow" in the 12th verse, and the being made "naked and open to the eyes, in the 13th, are all parts of the same sacrificial and judicial action, to

which, therefore, we can justly assign but one agent. The only reason given for the other interpretation is, that the term logos is nowhere else used by St. Paul. This can weigh but little against the obvious sense of the passage.

St. Luke, 1:2, appears to use the term logos in a personal sense, and he uses it but once; and if St. Paul uses it here, and not in his other epistles, this reason may be given, that in other epistles he writes to Jews and Gentiles united in the same Churches; here, to

Jews alone, among whom we have seen that the Logos was a well known theological term. (2) (2) "Non deerat peculiaris ratio, cur Filium Dei sic vocaret, cum ad Hebraeoos scriberet, qui eum illo nomine indigitare solebant: ut constat ex Targum, cujus pars hoc tempore facta cst, et ex Philone aliisque Hellenistis." (Poll Synop.)

The Socinians urge against this ascription of infinite knowledge to our Lord, Mark 13:32; "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels

which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only." The genuineness of the clause "neither the Son" has been disputed, and is not inserted by Griesbach in his text; there is not, however, sufficient reason for its rejection, though certainly in the parallel passage, Matt, 24:36, "neither the Son" is not found.

"But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven; but my Father only."

We are then reduced to this-a number of passages explicitly declare that Christ knows all things; there is one which declares that the Son did not know "the day and the hour" of judgment; again, there is a passage which certainly implies that even this period was known to Christ; for St. Paul, 1 Tim. 6:14, speaking of the "appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ" as the universal judge, immediately adds, "which in his own times kairos idios, shall show who is the blessed and only

potentate," &c. The day of judgment is here called "his own times" or "his own seasons" which, in its obvious sense, means the season he has himself fixed, since a certain manifestation of himself is in its fullness reserved by him to that period. As "the times and the seasons," also are said, in another place, to be in the Father's "own power;" so by an equivalent phrase, they are here said to be in the power of the Son, because they are "his own times." Doubtless, then, he knew "the day and the hour of

judgment." (3) Now, certainly, no such glaring and direct contradiction can exist in the word of truth, as that our Lord should know the day of judgment, and, at the same time, and in the same sense, not know it. Either, therefore, the passage in Mark must admit of an interpretation which will make it consistent with other passages which clearly affirm our Lord's knowledge of all things, and consequently of this great day, or these passages must submit to such an interpretation as will bring

them into accordance with that in Mark. It cannot, however, be in the nature of things that texts, which clearly predicate an infinite knowledge, should be interpreted to mean a finite and partial knowledge, and this attempt would only establish a contradiction between the text and the comment. Their interpretation is imperative upon us; but the text in Mark is capable of an interpretation which involves no contradiction or absurdity whatever, and which makes it accord with the rest of the Scripture

testimony on this subject. This may be done two ways. The first is adopted by Macknight.

(3) kairos idios, tempore, quod ipse novit. Erat itaque tempus adventus Christi ignotum Apostolis." (Rosenmuller.)

"The word oiden here seems to have the force of the Hebrew conjunction, hiphil, which in verbs denoting action, makes that action, whatever it is, pass to another. Wherefore eideu, which properly signifies, I know, used in the sense of the

conjunction hiphil, signifies, I make another to know, I declare. The word has this meaning, without dispute, 1 Cor. 2:2. 'I determined, eidenai, to know nothing among you, but Jesus Christ and him crucified;' i. e. I determined to make known, to preach nothing, but Jesus Christ. So, likewise, in the text, `But of that day and that hour, none maketh you to know,' none hath power to make you know it; just as the phrase, Matt, 20:23, ' is not mine to give,' signifies, 'is not in my power to give:'-' no, not the angels,

neither the Son, but the Father.' Neither man nor angel, nor even the Son himself, can reveal the day and hour of the destruction of Jerusalem to you: because the Father hath determined that it should not be revealed." (Harmony.)

The second is the usual manner of meeting the difficulty, and refers the words "neither the Son" exclusively to the human nature of our Lord, which we know, as to the body, "grew in stature,"

and as to the mind, in "wisdom." Bishop Kidder, in answering the Socinian objection from the lips of a Jew, observes, -

"1. That we Christians do believe, not only that christ was GOD; but also that he was perfect man, of a reasonable soul, and human flesh subsisting.

"We do believe, that his body was like one of ours: a real, not a fantastic and imaginary one.

"We do also believe, that he had a human soul, of the same nature and kind with

one of ours; though it was free from sin, and all original stain and corruption. And no wonder then, that we read of him, that he increased, not only in stature, and in favor with God and man, but in wisdom also: Luke 2:52. Now wisdom is a spiritual endowment, and belongs to the mind or soul. He could not be said to increase in wisdom as he was GOD; nor could this be said of him with respect to his body, for that is not the subject of wisdom; but with regard to the human soul

of christ, the other part of our human nature.

"2. It must be granted, that as man he did not know beyond the capacities of human and finite understanding; and not what he knew as God. He could not be supposed to know in this respect things not knowable by man, any otherwise than as the Divine nature and wisdom thought fit to communicate and impart such knowledge to him.

"3. That therefore christ may be said, with respect to his human nature and

finite understanding, not to know the precise time, the day and hour of some future events.

"4. 'Tis farther to be considered how the evangelists report this matter; they do it in such terms as are very observable. Of that day and hour knoweth no man; it follows, neither the Son. He doth not say the Son of God, nor the logos, or Word, but the Son only.

"I do not know all this while, where there is any inconsistency in the faith of Christians; [arising from

this view;] when we believe that jesus was in all things made like unto us, and in some respect a little lower than the angels, Heb. 2:7, 17. I see no force in the above-named objection."

(Demonstration of Messiah.)

The "Son of man," it is true, is here placed above the angels; but, as Waterland observes," the particular concern the Son of man has in the last judgment is sufficient to account for the supposed climax or gradation.

"It is, indeed, objected by Socinians, that these interpretations of Mark 13:32, charge our Savior, if not with direct falsehood, at least with criminal evasion; since he could not say with truth and sincerity, that he was ignorant of the day, if he knew it in any capacity; as it cannot be denied that man is immortal, so long as he is, in any respect, immortal. The answer to this is, that as it may truly be said of the body of man, that it is not immortal, though the soul is; so it may, with equal truth, be

said, that the Son of man was ignorant of some things, though the Son of God knew everything. It is not, then, inconsistent with truth and sincerity for our Lord to deny that he knew what he really did know in one capacity, while he was ignorant of it in another. Thus, in one place he says, ' Now I am no more in the world,' John 17:11; and in another, ' Ye have the poor always with you, but me ye have not always,' Matt. 26:11; yet on another occasion, he says,

'Lo I am with you always,' Matt. 28:20; and again, ' If any man love me-my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him,' John 14:23. From hence we see that our Lord might, without any breach of sincerity, deny that of himself, considered in one capacity, which he could not have denied in another. There was no equivocation in his denying the knowledge of ' that day and that hour,' since, with respect to his human nature, it was most true; and that he designed it to

refer alone to his human nature, is probable, because he does not say the Son of God was ignorant of that day, but the Son, meaning the Son of man, as appears from the context, Matthew 24:37, 39; Mark 13:26, 34. Thus Mark 13:32, which, at first sight, may seem to favor the Unitarian hypothesis, is capable of a rational and unforced interpretation, consistently with the orthodox faith." (Holders Testimonies.) As the knowledge of the heart is attributed to Christ, so also is the knowledge of

futurity, which is another quality so peculiar to Deity, that we find the true God distinguishing himself from all the false divinities of the heathen by this circumstance alone. "To whom will ye liken me, and make me equal, and compare me, that we may be like?" "I am God, and there is none like me.

Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure," Isa. 46:5, 9, 10.

All the predictions uttered by our Savior, and which are no-where referred by him to inspiration, the source to which all the prophets and apostles refer their prophetic gifts, but were spoken as from his own prescience, are in proof of his possessing this attribute. It is also affirmed, John 6:64, that "Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him;" and again, John 13:11, "For Jesus knew who should betray him."

Thus we find the Scriptures ascribing to Jesus an existence without beginning, without change, without limitation, and connected, in the whole extent of space which it fills, with the exercise of the most perfect intelligence. These are essential attributes of Deity. "Measures of power may be communicated; degrees of wisdom and goodness may be imparted to created spirits; but our conceptions of God are confounded, and we lose sight of every circumstance by which he is

characterized, if such a manner of existence as we have now described be common to him and any creature." (Hill's Lectures.)

To these attributes may also be added omnipotence, which is also peculiar to the Godhead; for, though power may be communicated to a creature, yet a finite capacity must limit the communication, nor can it exist infinitely, any more than wisdom, except in an infinite nature.

Christ is, however, styled, Rev. 1:8, "THE almighty."

To the Jews he said, 'What things soever he [the Father] doeth, these also doeth the son likewise." Farther, he declares, that "as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself," which is a most strongly marked distinction between himself and all creatures whatever. He has "life in himself," and he has it "as the Father" has it, that is, perfectly and infinitely, which sufficiently demonstrates that he is of the same essence, or he could not have this

communion of properties with the Father.

The life is, indeed, said to be "given" but this communication from the Father makes no difference in the argument. Whether the "life" mean the same original and independent life, which at once entitles the Deity to the appellations "the living God," and "the father of spirits,"

or the bestowing of eternal life upon all believers, it amounts to the same thing. The "life" which is thus bestowed upon believers,

the continuance and + perfect blessedness of existence, is from Christ as its fountain, and he has it as the Father himself hath it. By his eternal generation it was derived from the Father to him, and he possesses it equally with the Father; by the appointment of his Father he is made the source of eternal life to believers, as having that life in himself to bestow, and to supply forever.

We may sum up the whole Scriptural argument, from Divine attributes being

ascribed by the disciples to our Savior, and claimed by f himself, with his own remarkable declaration, "all things which the Father hath are mine," John 16:15. "Here he challenges to himself the incommunicable attributes, and, consequently, that essence which is inseparable from them."

(Whitby.) "If God the Son hath all things that the Father hath, then hath he all -the attributes and perfections belonging to the Father, the same power, rights, and

privileges, the same honor and glory; and, in a word, the same nature, substance, and Godhead." (Waterland.)

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34 THE ACTS ASCRIBED TO CHRIST PROOFS OF HIS DIVINITY

This argument is in confirmation of the foregoing; for, if not only the proper names of God, his majestic and peculiar titles, and his attributes, are attributed to our Lord;

but if also acts have been done by him which, in the nature of things, cannot be performed by any creature, however exalted, then he by whom they were done must be truly God.

The first act of this kind is creation-the creation of all things. It is not here necessary to enter into any argument to prove that creation, in its proper sense, that is, the production of things out of nothing, is possible only to Divine power. The Socinians themselves acknowledge this; and,

therefore, employ their perverting, but feeble criticisms in a vain attempt to prove, that the creation, of which Christ, in the New Testament, is said to be the author, is to be understood of a moral creation, or of the regulation of all things in the evangelic dispensation. I shall not adduce many passages to prove that a proper creation is ascribed to our Lord; for they are sufficiently in the recollection of the reader. It is enough that two or three of them only be exhibited, which cannot be

taken, without manifest absurdity, in any other sense but as attributing the whole physical creation to him.

The ascription of the creation of "all things," in the physical sense, to the Divine Word, in the introduction to St. John's Gospel, has been vindicated against the Socinian interpretation in a preceding page. I shall only farther remark upon it, first, that if St. John had intended a moral, and not a physical creation, he could not have expressed himself,

as he does without intending to mislead; a supposition equally contrary to his inspiration and to his piety. He affirms that "all things" and that without limitation or restriction, "were made by him;" that "without him was not anything made that was made;" which clearly means, that there is no created object which had not Christ for its Creator; an assertion which contains a revelation of a most important and fundamental doctrine. If, however, it be taken in the Socinian sense, it is a

pitiful truism, asserting that Christ did nothing in establishing his religion which he did not do: for to this effect their Version itself expresses it, - "all things were done by him, and without him was not anything done that hath been done;" or, as they might have rendered it, to make the folly still more manifest, "without him was not anything done that was done by him, or which he himself did."

Unfortunately, however, for the notion of arranging or regulating the new

dispensation, the apostle adds a full confirmation of his former doctrine, that the physical creation was the result of the power of the Divine Word, by asserting, that "the world was made by him;" (4) that world into which he came as "the light" that world in which he was when he was made flesh; that world which "knew him not." It matters nothing to the argument, whether "the world" be understood of men or of the material world. on either supposition it was made by him, and the creation was,

therefore, physical. In neither case could the creation be a moral one, for the material world is incapable of a moral renewal; and the world which "knew not" Christ, if understood of men, was not renewed, but unregenerated; or he would have been "known," that is, acknowledged by them.

(4) "The world was enlightened by him," says the New Version; which perfectly gratuitous rendering has been before adverted to.

Another passage, equally incapable of being referred to any but a physical creation, is found in Heb. 1:2, "By whom also he made the worlds." "God," says the apostle, "hath in these last days spoken unto us by his son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things;" and then he proceeds to give farther information of the nature and dignity of the personage thus denominated "SON" and "heir;" and his very first declaration concerning him, in this exposition of his character, in order to

prove him greater than angels, who are the greatest of all created beings, is that "by him also God made the worlds." Two methods have been resorted to, in order to ward off the force of this decisive testimony as to the Deity of Christ, grounded upon his creative acts. The first is, to render the words, "for whom he made the worlds;" thus referring creation immediately to the Father, and making the preposition gia, with a genitive case, signify the final cause, the reason or end, for which "the worlds"

were created. Were this even allowed, it would be a strange doctrine to assert, that for a mere man, for the exercise of the ministry of a mere man, as Christ is taken to be upon the Socinian hypothesis, "the worlds," the whole visible creation, with its various orders of intellectual beings, were created. This is a position almost as much opposed to that corrupt hypothesis as is the orthodox doctrine itself, and is another instance in proof that difficulties are multiplied, rather than lessened, by departing

from the obvious sense of Scripture. But no example is found, in the whole New Testament, of the use of dia with a genitive to express the final cause; and, in the very next verse, St. Paul uses the same construction to express the efficient cause, - "when he had by himself purged our sins." "This interpretation," says Whitby, justly, "is contrary to the rule of all grammarians; contrary to the exposition of all the Greek fathers, and also without example in the New Testament."

The second resource, therefore, is to understand "the worlds," to·s aio=nas, in the literal import of the phrase, for "the ages," or the Gospel dispensation. But "o·s aio=nas, absolutely put, doth never signify the Church, or evangelical state; nor doth the Scripture ever speak of the world to come in the plural, but in the singular number only." (Whitby.) The phrase o·s aio=nas was adopted either as equivalent to the Jewish division of the whole creation into three parts, this lower world, the region

of the stars, and the third heaven, the residence of God and his angels; or as expressive of the duration of the world, extending through an indefinite number of ages, and standing opposed to the short life of its inhabitants. aion primo longum tempus, postea eternitatem, apud Scriptures N. T. vero kosmos mundum significat, ex Hebraismo, ubi slns et syslns de mundo accipitur, quia mundus post tot generationes hominum perpetuo durat.

(Rosenmuller.) The apostle, in writing to the Hebrews, used, therefore, a mode of expression which was not only familiar to them; but which they could not but understand of the natural creation. This, however, is put out of all doubt by the use of the same phrase in the eleventh chapter - "through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things that do appear;" words which can only be understood of the physical creation. Another

consideration, which takes the declaration, "by whom also he made the worlds," out of the reach of all the captious and puerile criticism on which we have remarked, is, that, in the close of the chapter, the apostle reiterates the doctrine of the creation of the world by Jesus Christ: "But unto the son he saith," not only, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever;" but, "Thou, Lord, (Jehovah,) in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine

hands:" words to which the perverted adroitness of heretics has been able to affix no meaning, when taken in any other sense than as addressed to Christ, and which will forever attach to him, on the authority of inspiration, The title of "Jehovah," and array him in all the majesty of creative power and glory. It is, indeed, a very conclusive argument in favor of the three great points of Christian doctrine, as comprehended in the orthodox faith, that it is impossible to interpret

this celebrated chapter, according to any fair rule of natural and customary interpretation, without admitting that Christ is God, the divine Son of God, and the mediator. The last is indicated by his being the medium through whom, in these last days, the will of God is communicated to mankind, "God hath spoken" by him; and by his being "anointed" priest and king "above his fellows." The second is expressed both by his title, "the son," and by the superiority which, in virtue of that name, he has above

angels, and the worship which, as the son, they are enjoined to pay to him. He is also called God, and this term is fixed in its highest import, by his being declared "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person," and by the creative acts which are ascribed to him; while his character of Son, as being of the Father, is still preserved by the two metaphors of "brightness" and "image" and by the expression, "God, even thy God." On these principles only is the apostle

intelligible: on any other, the whole chapter is incapable of consistent exposition

The only additional passage which it is necessary to produce, in order to show that Christ is the Creator of all things, and that the creation of which he is the author, is not a moral but a physical creation; not the framing of the Christian dispensation, but the forming of the whole universe of creatures out of nothing, is Coloss. 1:15-17: "Who is the image of the invisible God, the

first born of every creature: for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." The Socinians interpret this of "that great change which was introduced into the moral world, and particularly into the relative situation of Jews and Gentiles, by the dispensation of the

Gospel." (Improved Version.) But,

1. The apostle introduces this passage as a reason why we have "redemption through his blood;"

ver. 14; why, in other words, the death of Christ was efficacious, and obviously attributes this efficacy to the dignity of his nature. This is the scope of his argument. 2. He, therefore, affirms him to be "the image" (eikon,) the exact representation or resemblance of the invisible God; which, when compared with Heb. 1:2,

"who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person," shows that the apostle uses the word in a sense in which it is not applicable to any human or angelic being, - "the first born of every creature;" or, more literally, "the first born of the whole creation." The Arians have taken this in the sense of the first-made creature; but this is refuted by the term itself, which is not "first. made" but "first born;" and by the following verse, which proves him to be first born, for, or

because (hoti) "by him were all things created." As to the date of his being, he was before all created things, for they were created by him: as to the manner of his being, he was by generation not creation. The apostle does not say, that he was created the first of all creatures; but, that he was born before them: (Vide Wolf in loc.)-a plain allusion to the generation of the Son before time began, and before creatures existed. Wolf has also shown, that among the Jews Jehovah is sometimes called the

primogenitum mundi, "the first born of the world," because they attributed the creation of the world to the Lorros, the Word of the Lord, the ostensible Jehovah of the Old Testament, whom certainly they never meant to include among the creatures; and that they called him also the Son of God. It was, then, n perfect accordance with the theological language of the Jews themselves, that the apostle calls our Lord "the first born of the whole creation."

The Arian interpretation, which makes the first-made creature the Creator of the rest, is thus destroyed. The Socinian notion is as manifestly absurd. If the creation here be the new dispensation, the Christian Church, then to call Christ the first born of this creation is to make the apostle say that Christ was the first-made member of the Christian Church; and the reason given for this is, that he made or constituted the Church! If by this they mean simply that he was the author of Christianity, we have again

a puerile truism put into the lips of the apostle. If they mean that the apostle declares that Christ was the first Christian, it is difficult to conceive how this can be gravely affirmed as a comment on the words; if anything else, it is impossible to discover any connection in the argument, that is, between the proposition that Christ is the first born of the whole creation, and the proof of it which is adduced, that by him were all things created. The annotators on the New Version say, "It is plain

from comparing this passage with verse 18, (where Christ is called the first born from the dead,) that Christ is called the first born of the whole creation, because he is the first who was raised from the dead to an immortal life."

This is far from being "plain;" but it is plain that, in these two verses, the apostle speaks of Christ in two different states, first, in his state "before all things," and as the sustainer of all things; and, then, in his state in "the Church" verse

18, in which is added to the former particulars respecting him, - that "he is the head of the body, the Church, who is the beginning, the first born from the dead." Again, if in verses 15, 16, 17, the apostle is speaking of what Christ is in and to the Church, under the figure of a creation of all things in heaven and in earth, when he drops the figure and teaches us that Christ is the head of the Church, the first born from the dead, he uses a mere tautology; nor is there any apparent reason why he should not,

in the same plain terms, have stated his proposition at once, without resorting to expressions which, in this view, would be far-fetched and delusive. In "the Church" he was "head," and "the first born from the dead,"

the only one who ever rose to die no more, and who gives an immortal life to those he quickens; but before the Church existed, or he himself became incarnate, "before all things," says the apostle, he was the "first born of the whole creation," that is, as

the fathers understood it, he was born or begotten before every creature. But the very terms of the text are an abundant refutation of the notion, "that the creation here mentioned is not the creation of natural substances." The things created are said to be "all things in heaven and upon the earth;" and, lest the invisible spirits in the heaven should be thought to be excluded, the apostle adds "things visible and things invisible;" and, lest the invisible things should be understood of inferior angels or spiritual beings,

and the high and glorious beings, who "excel in strength," and are, in Scripture, invested with other elevated properties, should be suspected to be exceptions, the apostle becomes still more particular, and adds, whether "thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers," terms by which the Jews expressed the different orders of angels, and which are used in that sense-by this apostle, Ephesians 1:21. It is a shameless criticism of the authors of the New Version, and

shows how hardly they were pushed by this decisive passage, that "the apostle does not here specify things themselves, namely, celestial and terrestrial substances, but merely states of things, namely, thrones, dominions, &c, which are only ranks and orders of beings in the rational and moral world." Was it, then, forgotten, that before St. Paul speaks of things in rank and order, he speaks of all things collectively which are in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible? If so, he then,

unquestionably, speaks of "things themselves" or he speaks of nothing. Nor is it true, that , in the enumeration of thrones, dominions, &c, he speaks of the creation of ranks and orders. He does not speak "merely of states of things, but of things in states; he does not say that Christ created thrones, and dominions, and principalities, and powers, which would have been more to their purpose, but that he created all things, `whether' eite, 'they be thrones,' &c." The apostle adds, that all things were

created by him, and for him, as the end; which could not be said of Christ, even if a moral creation were intended, since, on the Socinian hypothesis that he is a mere man, a prophet of God, he is but the instrument of restoring man to obedience and subjection, for the glory and in accomplishment of the purposes of God. But how is the whole of this description to be made applicable to a figurative creation, to the moral restoration of lapsed beings? It is as plainly historical as the words of

Moses, "In the be-ginning God created the heavens and the earth." "Things visible" and "things on earth" comprise, of course, all those objects which, being neither sensible nor rational, are incapable of moral regeneration, while "things in heaven" and "things invisible" comprise the angels which never sinned and who need no repentance and no renewal. Such are those gross perversions of the word of God which this heresy induces, and with such indelible evidence is the Divinity of our Lord

declared by his acts of power and glory, as the universal creator. The admirable observations of Bishop Pearson may, properly, conclude what has been said on this important passage of inspired writ.

"In these words our Savior is expressly styled the first born of every creature,' that is, begotten by God, as `the Son of his love,' antecedently to all other emanations, before anything proceeded from him or was framed and created by him. And that

precedency is presently proved by this undeniable argument, that all other emanations or productions come from him, and whatsoever received its being by creation was by him created, which assertion is delivered in the most proper, full, and frequent expressions imaginable: First, in the plain language of Moses, as most consonant to his description: ' for by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth; 'signifying thereby that he speaketh of the same creation. Secondly,

by a division which Moses never used, as describing the production only of corporeal substances: lest, therefore, those immaterial beings might seem exempted from the Son's creation, because omitted in Moses' description, he addeth 'visible and invisible;' and lest in that invisible world, among the many degrees of celestial hierarchy, any order might seem exempted from an essential dependence on him, he nameth those which are of greatest eminence, 'whether they be thrones, or dominions, or

principalities, or powers,' and under them comprehendeth all the rest. Nor doth it yet suffice, thus to extend the object of his power, by asserting all things to be made by him, except it be so understood as to acknowledge the sovereignty of his person, and the authority of his action. For lest we should conceive the Son of God framing the world as a mere instrumental cause which worketh by and for another, he showeth him as well the final as the efficient cause; for, ' all things were created by him

and for him.' Lastly, whereas all things first receive their being by creation, and when they have received it, continue in the same by virtue of God's conservation, ' in whom we live and move and have our being;' lest in anything we should not depend immediately upon the Son of God, he is described as the conserver, as well as the Creator, for 'He is before all things, and by him all things consist.' If then we consider these two latter verses by themselves, we cannot deny but they are a most complete

description of the Creator of the world; and if they were spoken of God the Father, could be no way injurious to his majesty, who is nowhere more plainly, or fully set forth unto us as the Maker of the world."

But our Lord himself professes to do other acts, beside the great act of creating, which are peculiar to God; and such acts are also attributed to him by his inspired apostles. His preserving of all things made by him has already been mentioned, and which

implies not only a Divine power, but also ubiquity, since he must be present to all things, in order to their constant conservation. The final destruction of the whole frame of material nature is also as expressly attributed to him as its creation. "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thine hands; these shall perish, but thou remainest, and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed." Here omnipotent power is seen

"changing," and removing, and taking away the vast universe of material things with the same ease as it was spoken into being and at first disposed into order. Generally, too, our Lord claims to perform the works of his Father. "If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not; but if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works." - Should this, even, be restrained to the working of miracles, the argument remains the same. No prophet, no apostle, ever used such language in speaking of his miraculous

gifts. Here Christ declares that he performs the works of his Father; not merely that the Father worked by him, but that he himself did the works of God; which can only mean works proper or peculiar to God, and which a Divine power only could effect. (5) So the Jews understood him, for, upon this declaration, "they sought again to take him." That this power of working miracles was in him an original power, appears also from his bestowing that power upon his disciples. "Behold I give unto you power to tread on

serpents, and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you," Luke 10:19. - "And he gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases," Luke 9:1.

Their miracles were, therefore, to be performed in his name, by which the power of effecting them was expressly reserved to him. "In my name shall they cast out devils;" "and his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong."

(5) "Si non facio ea ipsa divina opera, quse pater meus facit; si quae facio, non habent divinae virtutis specimen." (Rosenmuller.) "Opera Patris mei, i. e. quae Patri, sive Deo, sunt propria: quae a nemine alio fieri queunt." (Poli Synop.)

The manner in which our Lord promises the Holy Spirit is farther in proof that he performs acts peculiar to the Godhead. He speaks of "sending the Spirit" in the language of one who had an original right and an inherent power to bestow that

wondrous gift which was to impart miraculous energies, and heavenly wisdom, comfort, and purity to human minds. Does the Father send the Spirit? He claims the same power, - "the Comforter, whom I will send unto you." The Spirit is, on this account, called "the Spirit of Christ," and "the Spirit of God." Thus the giving of the Spirit is indifferently ascribed to the Son and to the Father; but when that gift is immediately bestowed by the apostles, no such language is assumed by them: they

pray to Christ, and to the Father in his name, and he, their exalted Master, sheds forth the blessing -

"therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear."

Another of the unquestionably peculiar acts of God, is the forgiveness of sins. In the manifest reason of the thing, no one can forgive but the party offended; and as sin is the transgression

of the law of God, he, alone, is the offended party, and he only, therefore, can forgive. -

Immediately, others may declare his pardoning acts, or the conditions on which he determines to forgive; but, authoritatively, there can be no actual forgiveness of sins against God but by God himself. But Christ forgives sin authoritatively, and he is, therefore, God. One passage is all that is necessary to prove this. "He said to the sick of the palsy, Son, be of good

cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee" The scribes, who were present, understood that he did this authoritatively, and assumed, in this case, the rights of Divinity. They therefore said, among themselves, "This man blasphemeth." What then is the conduct of our Lord? Does he admit that he only ministerially declared, in consequence of some revelation, that God had forgiven the sins of the paralytic? On the contrary, he works a miracle to prove to them, that the very right which they disputed was

vested in him, that he had this authority - "but that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, then saith he to the sick of the palsy, Arise, take up thy bed, and go into thine own house."

Such were the acts performed by our Savior, in the days of his sojourn on earth, and which he is represented, by his inspired apostles, to be still constantly performing, or as having the power to perform. - If any creature is capable of doing the same mighty works, then is all

distinction between created, finite natures, and the uncreated Infinite destroyed. If such a distinction, in fact, exists; if neither creation, preservation, nor salvation be possible to a mere creature, we have seen that they are possible to Christ, because he actually creates, preserves, and saves; and the inevitable conclusion is, that He is very God.

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35 DIVINE WORSHIP PAID TO CHRIST

From Christ's own acts we may pass to those of his disciples and particularly to one which unequivocally marks their opinion respecting his Divinity: they worship him as a Divine person, and they enjoin this also upon Christians to the end of time. If Christ, therefore, is not God, the apostles were idolaters, and Christianity is a system of impiety. This is a point so important as to demand a close investigation.

The fact that Divine worship was paid to Christ by his disciples must be first established.

Instances of falling down at the feet of Jesus and worshipping him are so frequent in the Gospel, that it is not necessary to select the instances which are so familiar; and though we allow that the word proskuneo is sometimes used to express that lowly reverence with which, in the east, it has been always customary to salute persons considered as greatly superior, and

especially rulers and sovereigns, it is yet the same word which, in a great number of instances, is used to express the worship of the supreme God. We are, then, to collect the intention of the act of worship, whether designed as a token of profound civil respect, or of real and Divine adoration, from the circumstances of the instances on record. When a leper comes and "worships" Christ, professing to believe that he had the power of healing diseases, and that in himself, which power he

could exercise at his will, all which he expresses by saying, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean," we see a Jew retaining that faith of the Jewish Church in its purity, which had been corrupted among so many of his nation, that the Messiah was to be a Divine person; and, viewing our Lord under that character, he regarded his miraculous powers as original and personal, and so hesitated not to worship him. Here then, is a case in which the circumstances clearly show that the worship was religious and supreme.

When the man who had been cured of blindness by Jesus, and who had defended his prophetic character before the council, before he knew that he had a higher character than that of a prophet, was met in private by Jesus, and instructed in the additional fact, that he was "the Son of God," he worshipped him. "Jesus heard, that they had cast him out, and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might

believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe, and he worshipped him:" - worshipped him, be it observed, under his character, "Son of God," a title which, we have already seen, was regarded by the Jews as implying actual Divinity, and which the man understood to raise Jesus far above the rank of a mere prophet. The worship paid by this man must, therefore, in its intention, have been supreme, for it was offered

to an acknowledged Divine person, the Son of God. When the disciples, fully yielding to the demonstration of our Lord's Messiahship, arising out of a series of splendid miracles, recognized him also under his personal character, "they came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of GOD!" Matt. 14:33. When Peter, upon the miraculous draught of fishes, "fell at his feet," and said, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord," these expressions themselves mark as strongly the awe

and apprehension which is produced in the breast of a sinful man, when he feels himself in the presence of Divinity itself, as when Isaiah exclaims, in his vision of the Divine glory," Woe is me, for I am undone, for I am a man of unclean lips, and dwell among a people of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts."

The circumstances then, which accompany these instances make it evident, that the worship here paid to our Lord was of the

highest order; and they will serve to explain several other cases in the Gospels, similar in the act, though not accompanied with illustrative circumstances so explicit. But there is one general consideration of importance which applies to them all. Such acts of lowly prostration as are called worship were chiefly paid to civil governors. Now our Lord cautiously avoided giving the least sanction to the notion that he had any civil pretensions, and that his object was to make himself king. It would, therefore,

have been a marked inconsistency to suffer himself to be saluted with the homage and prostration proper to civil governors, and which, indeed, was not always in Judea, rendered to them. He did not receive this homage, then, under the character of a civil ruler or sovereign; and under what character could he receive it? Not in compliance with the haughty custom of the Jewish rabbis, who exacted great external reverence from their disciples, for he sharply reproved their haughtiness and love of

adulation and honor: not as a simple teacher of religion, for his apostles might then have imitated his example, since, upon the Socinian hypothesis of his mere manhood, they, when they had collected disciples and founded Churches, had as clear a right to this distinction as he himself, had it only been one of appropriate and common courtesy sanctioned by their master.

But when do we read of their receiving worship without spurning it on the very ground that "they

were men of like passions" with others? How, then, is it to be accounted for, that our Lord never forbade or discouraged this practice as to himself, or even shunned it? In no other way than that he was conscious of his natural right to the homage thus paid; and that he accepted it as the expression of a faith which, though sometimes wavering, because of the obscurity which darkened the minds of his followers, and which even his own conduct, mysterious as it necessarily was, till "he openly showed

himself" after his passion, tended to produce, yet sometimes pierced through the cloud, and saw and acknowledged, in the Word made flesh, "the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

But to proceed with instances of worship subsequent to our Lord's resurrection and ascension:

"He was parted from them, and carried up into heaven, and they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy," Luke 24:51, 52. Here the act must

necessarily have been one of Divine adoration, since it was performed after "he was parted from them," and cannot be resolved into the customary token of personal respect paid to superiors. This was always done in the presence of the superior; never by the Jews in his absence.

When the apostles were assembled to fill up the place of Judas, the lots being prepared, they pray, "Thou, Lord, who knowest the hearts of all men, show whether of these men thou hast chosen." That this

prayer is addressed to Christ is clear, from its being his special prerogative to choose his own disciples, who, therefore, styled themselves "apostles," not of the Father, but "of Jesus Christ." Here, then, is a direct act of worship, because an act of prayer; and our Lord is addressed as he who "knows the hearts of all men." Nor is this more than he himself claims in the Revelation, "And all the Churches shall know that I am he that searcheth the reins and the heart."

When Stephen, the protomartyr, was stoned, the writer of the Acts of the Apostles records two instances of prayer offered to our Lord by this man "full of the Holy Ghost," and therefore, according to this declaration, under plenary inspiration. "lord JESUS! receive my spirit!" "lord, lay not this sin to their CHARGE!" In the former he acknowledges Christ to be the disposer of the eternal states of men: in the latter, he acknowledges him to be the governor and judge of men, having power to remit, pass

by, or visit their sins. All these are manifestly Divine acts, which sufficiently show, that St. Stephen addressed his prayers to Christ as God. The note from Lindsay, inserted in the Socinian version, shows the manner in which the Socinians attempt to evade this instance of direct prayer being offered by the apostles to Christ. "This address of Stephen to Jesus, when he actually saw him, does not authorize us to offer prayers to him now he is invisible." And this is seriously alleged! How

does the circumstance of an object of prayer and religious worship being seen or unseen alter the case? May a man, when seen, be an object of prayer, to whom, unseen, it would be unlawful to pray? The papists, if this were true, would find a new refutation of their practice of invocating dead saints furnished by the Socinians. Were they alive and seen, prayer to them would be lawful; but now they are invisible, it is idolatry! Even image worship would derive, from this casuistry, a sort of apology, as the

seen image is, at least, the visible representation of the invisible saint or angel. But let the case be put fairly: suppose a dying person to pray to a man, visible and near his bed, "Lord, receive my spirit: Lord, lay not sin to the charge of my enemies," who sees not that this would be gross idolatry? And yet if Jesus be a mere man, the idolatry is the same, though that, man be in heaven. It will not alter the case, for the Socinian to say that the man Jesus is exalted to great dignity and rule in the invisible world;

for he is, after all, on their showing, but a servant; not a dispenser of the eternal states of men, not an avenger or a passerby of sin, in his own right, that he should lay sin to the charge of any one, or not lay it, as he might be desired to do by a disciple; and if St. Stephen had these views of him, he would not, surely, have asked of a ser-vant, what a servant had no power to grant. Indeed, the Socinians themselves give up the point, by denying that Christ is lawfully the object of prayer. There,

however, he is prayed to, beyond all controversy, and his right and power to dispose of the disembodied spirits of men is as much recognized in the invocation of the dying Stephen, as the same right and power in the Father, in the last prayer of our Lord himself: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

To Dr. Priestley's objection, that this is an inconsiderable instance, and is to be regarded as a mere ejaculation, Bishop Horsley forcibly replies:

"St. Stephen's short ejaculatory address you had not forgot-ten; but you say it is very inconsiderable. But, sir, why is it inconsiderable? Is it because it was only an ejaculation? Ejaculations are often prayers of the most fervid kind; the most expressive of self-abasement and adoration. Is it for its brevity that it is inconsiderable?

What, then, is the precise length of words which is requisite to make a prayer an act of worship?

Was this petition preferred on an occasion of distress, on which a Divinity might be naturally invoked? Was it a petition for a succor which none but a Divinity could grant? If this was the case, it was surely an act of worship. Is the situation of the worshipper the circumstance which, in your judgment, sir, lessens the authority of his example? You suppose, perhaps, some consternation of his faculties, arising from distress and fear. The history justifies no such supposition. It describes

the utterance of the final prayer, as a deliberate act of one who knew his situation, and possessed his understanding. After praying for himself, he kneels down to pray for his persecutors: and such was the composure with which' he died, although the manner of his death was the most tumultuous and terrifying, that as if he had expired quietly upon his bed, the sacred historian says, that 'he fell asleep.' If, therefore, you would insinuate, that St. Stephen was not himself, when he sent forth this 'short

ejaculatory address to Christ,' the history refutes you.

If he was himself, you cannot justify his prayer to Christ, while you deny that Christ is God, upon any principle that might not equally justify you or me, in praying to the blessed Stephen. If St. Stephen, in the full possession of his faculties, prayed to him who is no God, why do we reproach the Romanist, when he chants the litany of his saints?"

St. Paul, also, in that affliction, which he

metaphorically describes by "a thorn in the flesh," "sought the Lord thrice" that it might depart from him; and the answer shows that "the lord," to whom he addressed his prayer, was CHRIST; for he adds, "and he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee, for My strength is made perfect in weakness: most gladly, therefore, will I glory in my infirmities, that the power of christ may rest upon me;" clearly signifying the power of him who had said, in answer to his prayer, " My strength, dunamis,

power, is made perfect in weakness."

St. Paul also prays to Christ, conjointly with the Father, in behalf of the Thessalonians. "Now our lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good work" 2 Thess. 2:16, 17. In like manner he invokes our Lord to grant his spiritual presence to Timothy: "The Lord Jesus be with thy

spirit," 2 Tim. 4:22. The invoking of Christ is, indeed, adduced by St. Paul as a distinctive characteristic of Christians, so that among all the primitive Churches this practice must have been universal. "Unto the Church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of jesus christ our lord, both theirs and ours," 1 Cor. 1:2. "It appears, from the expression here and elsewhere used, that to

invocate the name of our Lord Jesus Christ was a practice characterizing and distinguishing Christians from infidels." (Dr. Benson.) Thus St. Paul is said, before his conversion, to have had "authority from the chief priests to bind all that call upon thy name." The Socinian criticism is, that the phrase epikaloumTnois t= =noma may be translated either "to call on the name," or be called by the name; and they, therefore, render 1

Cor. 1:2, "all that are called by the name of Jesus

Christ." If, however, all that can be said in favor of this rendering is, that the verb may be rendered passively, how is it that they choose to render it actively in all places, except where their system is to be served? This itself is suspicious. But it is not necessary to produce the refutations of this criticism given by several of their learned opponents, who have shown that the verb, followed by an accusative case, usually, if not constantly, is used, in its active signification, to call upon, to invoice. One passage is sufficient to

prove both the active signification of the phrase, when thus applied, and also that to call upon the name of Christ is an act of the highest worship. "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved," Rom. 10:13. This is quoted from the Prophet Joel. St. Peter, in his sermon on the day of pentecost, makes use of it as a prophecy of Christ, and the argument of St. Paul imperatively requires us also to understand it of him. Now this prophecy proves that the phrase in question is used for

invocation, since it is not true that whosoever shall be called by the name of the Lord will be saved, but those only who rightly call upon it; it proves also that the calling upon the name of the Lord, here mentioned, is a religious act, for it is calling upon the name of Jehovah, the word used by the Prophet Joel, the consequence of which act of faith and worship is salvation. "This text, indeed, presents us with a double argument in favor of our Lord's Divinity. First, it applies to him what, by the Prophet

Joel, is spoken of Jehovah; secondly, it affirms him to be the object of religious adoration. Either of these particulars does, indeed, imply the other; for if he be Jehovah, he must be the object of religious adoration; and if he be the object of religious adoration, he must be Jehovah." (Bishop Horne.) In the Revelation, too, we find St. John worshipping Christ, "falling at his feet as one dead." St.

Paul also declares, "that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow," which, in

Scripture language, signifies an act of religious worship. "For this cause I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

But this homage and adoration of Christ is not confined to men: it is practiced among heavenly beings. "And again, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him." For the purpose of evading the force of these words, the Socinians, in their version, have chosen the absurdity

of rendering Angeloi throughout this chapter, by "messengers" but in the next chapter, as though the subject would, by that time, be out of the reader's mind, they return to the common version, "angels." Thus they make the "spirits and flames of fire," or, as they render it, "winds and flames of lightning," to be the ancient prophets or messengers, not angels; and of these same prophets and messengers, who lived several thousand years ago, their translation affirms that they "are sent forth to

minister for them who shall be (in future!) heirs of salvation." The absurdity is so apparent, that it is scarcely necessary to add, that, in the New Testament, though "angel" is sometimes applied to men, yet "angels of God" is a phrase never used, but to express an order of heavenly intelligences.

If, however, either prophets or angels were commanded to worship Christ, his Divinity would be equally proved, and, therefore, the note on this text, in the New Version

teaches, that "to worship Christ" here moons to acknowledge him as their superior; and urges that the text "is cited from the LXX, Deut. 32:43, "where it is spoken of the Hebrew nation, and, therefore, cannot be understood of religious worship," But whoever will turn to the LXX, will see that it is not the Hebrew nation, but Jehovah, who is exhibited in that passage as the object of worship; and if, therefore, the text were cited from the book of Deuteronomy, and the genuineness of the passage

in the LXX were allowed, for it is not in the present Hebrew text, it would only afford another proof, that, in the mind of the apostles, the Jehovah of the Old Testament and the Christ of the New are the same being, and that equal worship is due to both. We have, however, an unquestioned text in the Old Testament, Psalm 97:7, from which the quotation is obviously made; where, in the Hebrew, it is "worship him all ye gods," a probable ellipsis for "the angels of the Aleim;" for the LXX uses the word "angels."

This psalm the apostle, therefore, understood of Christ, and in this the old Jewish interpreters agree with him; (6) and though he is not mentioned in it by any of his usual Old Testament titles, except that of Jehovah, it clearly predicts the overthrow of idolatry by the introduction of the kingdom of this Jehovah. It follows then, that as idolatry was not overthrown by Judaism, but by the kingdom of Christ, it is Christ, as the head and author of this kingdom, of whom the psalmist speaks, and whom

he sees receiving the worship of the angels of God upon its introduction and establishment. This, also, agrees with the words by which the apostle introduces the quotation. "And again, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world" the habitable world; which intimates that it was upon some solemn occasion, when engaged in some solemn act, that the angels were commanded to worship him, and this act is represented in the ninety-seventh Psalm as the

establishment of his kingdom.

Bishop Horsley's remarks on this psalm are equally just and beautiful.

(6) "Psalmos omnes a XCIII ad CI in se continere mysteriura Messirr, dixit David Kjmshi."

(Rosenmuller.)

"That Jehovah's kingdom in some sense or other is the subject of this Divine song, cannot be made a question, for thus it opens, - 'Jehovah reigneth.' The psalm, therefore, must be understood, either of God's

natural kingdom over his whole creation; of his particular kingdom over the Jews, his chosen people; or of that kingdom which is called in the New Testament the kingdom of heaven, the kingdom of God, or the kingdom of Christ. For of any other kingdom beside these three, man never heard or read. God's peculiar kingdom over the Jews cannot be the subject of this psalm, because all nations of the earth are called upon to rejoice in the acknowledgment of this great truth, 'Jehovah

reigneth, let the earth rejoice; let the many isles be glad thereof.' The many isles are the various regions of the habitable world.

"The same consideration, that Jehovah's kingdom is mentioned as a subject of general thanksgiving, proves that God's universal dominion over his whole creation cannot be the kingdom in the prophet's mind. For in this kingdom a great majority of the ancient world, the idolaters, were considered, not as subjects who might rejoice in the glory of their

monarch; but as rebels who had everything to fear from his just resentment.

"It remains, therefore, that Christ's kingdom is that kingdom of Jehovah which the inspired poet celebrates as the occasion of universal joy. And this will farther appear by the sequel of the song.

After four verses, in which the transcendent glory, the irresistible power, and inscrutable perfection of the Lord, who to the joy of all nations reigneth, are painted in poetical images, taken partly from the awful

scene on Sinai which accompanied the delivery of the law, partly from other manifestations of God's presence with the Israelites in their journey through the wilderness, he proceeds, in the sixth verse, 'The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory.' We read in the 19th Psalm, that 'the heavens declare the glory of God.' And the glory of God, the power and the intelligence of the Creator, is indeed visibly declared in the fabric of the material world. But I cannot see how the structure of the

heavens can demonstrate the righteousness of God. Wisdom and power may be displayed in the contrivance of an inanimate machine; but righteousness cannot appear in the arrangement of the parts, or the direction of the motions of lifeless matter. The heavens therefore, in their external structure, cannot declare their Maker's righteousness. But the heavens, in another sense, attested the righteousness of Christ when the voice from heaven declared him the beloved Son of God, in

whom the Father was well pleased; and when the preternatural darkness of the sun at the crucifixion, and other agonies of nature, drew that confession from the heathen centurion who attended the execution, that the suffering Jesus was the Son of God; 'And all the people see his glory.' The word people, in the singular, for the most part denotes God's chosen people, the Jewish nation, unless any other particular people happen to be the subject of discourse. But peoples, in the plural, is

put for all the other races of mankind as distinct from the chosen people.

The word here is in the plural form, 'And all the peoples see his glory.' But when, or in what did any of the peoples, the idolatrous nations, see the glory of God? Literally they never saw his glory. The effulgence of the Shechinah never was displayed to them, except when it blazed forth upon the Egyptians to strike them with a panic; or when the towering pillar of flame, which marshaled the

Israelites in the wilderness, was seen by the inhabitants of Palestine and Arabia as a threatening meteor in their sky. Intellectually no idolaters ever saw the glory of God, for they never acknowledged his power and Godhead: had they thus seen his glory, they had ceased to be idolaters. But all the peoples, by the preaching of the Gospel, saw the glory of Christ. They saw it literally in the miracles performed by his apostles; they saw it spiritually when they perceived the purity of his precepts, when they

acknowledged the truth of his doctrine, when they embraced the profession of Christianity, and owned Christ for their Savior and their God. The psalmist goes on, `Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols. Worship him, all ye gods.' In the original this verse has not at all the form of a malediction, which it has acquired in our translation from the use of the strong word confounded. ` Let them be ashamed.' This is the utmost that the psalmist says. The prayer

that they may be ashamed of their folly and repent of it, is very different from an imprecation of confusion. But in truth the psalmist rather seems to speak prophetically, without any thing either of prayer or imprecation

-'they shall be ashamed.' Having seen the glory of Christ they shall be ashamed of the idols, which in the times of ignorance they worshipped. In the 8th and 9th verses, looking forward to the times when the fullness of the Gentiles

shall be come in, and the remnant of Israel shall turn to the Lord, he describes the daughter of Judah as rejoicing at the news of the mercy extended to the Gentile world, and exulting in the universal extent of Jehovah's kingdom, and the general acknowledgment of his Godhead." (Nine Sermons.)

The argument of the apostle is thus made clear; he proves Christ superior to angels, and therefore Divine, because angels themselves are commanded, "to worship

him." (7) Nor is this the only prophetic psalm in which the religious worship of Messiah is predicted. The 72d Psalm, alone, is full of this doctrine. "They shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure." "All kings shall worship (or, fall down) before him; all nations shall serve him." "prayer shall be made ever for (or, to) him, and daily shall he be praised."

(7) "Ceterum recte argumentatur apostolus: si angeli Regem illum maximum adorare debent;

ergo sunt illo inferiores." (Rosenmuller in loc.)

Finally, as to the direct worship of Christ, the book of Revelation, in its scenic representations, exhibits him as, equally with the Father, the object of the worship of angels and of glorified saints; and, in chapter eighth, places every creature in the universe, the inhabitants of hell only excepted, in prostrate adoration at his footstool. "And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and

such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the lamb for ever and ever."

To these instances are to be added, all the doxologies to Christ, in common with the Father and the Holy Spirit, and all the benedictions made in his name in common with theirs; for all these are forms of worship. The first consist of ascriptions of equal and Divine honors, with

grateful recognitions of the Being addressed, as the author of benefits received; the second are a solemn blessing of others in the name of God, and were derived from the practice of the Jewish priests and the still older patriarchs, who blessed others in the name of Jehovah, as his representatives.

Of the first, the following may be given as a few out of many instances: "The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me to his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory

forever and ever," 2 Tim. 4:18. "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ: to him be glory both now and forever. Amen," 2 Pet. 3:18. "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen," Rev. 1:5, 6. "When we consider the great difference between these doxologies and the commendations but sparingly given in the Scriptures to mere men;

the serious and reverential manner in which they are introduced; and the superlative praise they convey, so far surpassing what humanity can deserve, we cannot but suppose that the Being to whom they refer is really Divine. The ascription of eternal glory and everlasting dominion, if addressed to any creature, however exalted, would be idolatrous and profane." (Holders Testimonies.) Of benedictions the commencement and conclusion of several of the epistles furnish instances,

so regular in their form, as to make it clearly appear, that the apostles and the priests of the New Testament constantly blessed the people ministerially in the name of Christ, as one of the blessed trinity. This consideration alone shows that the benedictions are not, as the Socinians would take them, to be considered as cursory expressions of good will. "Grace to you, and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." This, with little variation, is the common form of salutation; and the

usual parting benediction is, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all;" or, more fully, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all." In answer to the Socinian perversion, that these are mere "wishes," it has been well and wisely observed, that "this objection overlooks, or notices very slightly, the point on which the whole question turns, the nature of the blessings sought, and the qualities which they imply in the Person as whose donation

they are deliberately desired. These blessings are not of that kind which one creature is competent to bestow upon another. They refer to the judicial state of an accountable being before God, to the remission of moral offences, to the production and preservation of certain mental qualities which none can efficaciously and immediately give but He who holds the dominion of human minds and feelings, and to the enjoyments of supreme and endless felicity. They are grace, mercy, and peace. Grace,

the free favor of the Eternal Majesty to those who have forfeited every claim to it, such favor as in its own nature and in the contemplation of the supplicant, is the sole and effective cause of deliverance from the greatest evils, and acquisition of the greatest good. Mercy, the compassion of infinite goodness, conferring its richest bestowments of holiness and happiness on the ruined, miserable, and helpless. Peace, the tranquil and delightful feeling which results from

the rational hope of possessing these enjoyments. These are the highest blessings that Omnipotent Benevolence can give, or a dependent nature receive. To desire such blessings, either in the mode of direct address or in that of precatory wish, from any being who is not possessed of omnipotent goodness, would be, not 'innocent and proper,' but sinful and absurd in the highest degree. When, therefore, we find every apostle whose epistles are extant, pouring out his 'expressions of desire,' with

the utmost simplicity and energy, for these blessings, as proceeding from 'our Lord Jesus Christ,'

equally with 'God our Father,' we cannot but regard it as the just and necessary conclusion that Christ and the Father are one in the perfection which originates the highest blessings, and in the honor due for the gift of those blessings." (Smith's Person of Christ.) So clearly does the New Testament show that supreme worship was paid to Christ, as well as to the Father; and the practice

obtained as a matter of course, as a matter quite undisputed in the primitive Church, and has so continued, in all orthodox Churches, to this day. Thus heathen writers represented the first Christians as worshippers of Christ; and, as for the practice of the primitive Church, it is not necessary to quote passages from the fathers, which are so well known, or so easily found in all books which treat on this subject. It is sufficient evidence of the practice, that when, in the fourth century, the Arians taught,

that our Lord was a super angelic creature only, they departed not, in the instance of worship, from the homage paid to him in the universal Church; but continued to adore Christ. On this ground the orthodox justly branded them with idolatry; and, in order to avoid the force of the charge, they invented those sophistical distinctions as to superior and inferior worship which the papists, in later times, introduced, in order to excuse the worship of saints and angels. Even the old Socinians allowed

Christ to be the object of religious adoration; so impossible was it, even for them, to oppose themselves all at once to the reproving and condemning universal example of the Church of Christ in all ages.

Having, then, established the fact of the worship of Christ by his immediate followers, whose precepts and example have, in this matter been followed by all the faithful; let us consider the religious principles which the first disciples held, in order to determine whether they could have so

worshipped Christ, unless his true Divinity had been, with them, a fundamental and universally received doctrine. They were Jews; and Jews of an age in which their nation had long shaken off its idolatrous propensities, and which was distinguished by its zeal against all worship, or expressions of religious trust and hope being directed, not only to false gods, (to idols,) but to creatures. The great principle of the law was, "Thou shalt have no other gods before (or, beside) me." It was, therefore,

commanded by Moses, "Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and him shalt thou serve;" which words are quoted by our Lord in his temptation, when solicited to worship Satan, so as to prove that to fear God and to serve him are expressions which signify worship, and that all other beings but God are excluded from it. "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." The argument, too, in the quotation, is not that Satan had no right to receive worship because he was an evil spirit; but that,

whatever he might be, or whoever should make that claim, God only is to be worshipped. By this, also, we see that Christianity made no alteration in Judaism, as to the article of doctrine, for our Lord himself here adopts it as his own principle; he quotes it from the writings of Moses, and so transmitted it, on his own authority, to his followers. Accordingly, we find the apostles teaching and practicing this as a first principle of their religion. St. Paul, Rom. 1:21-25, charges the heathen with

not glorifying God when they knew him, and worshipping and serving "the creature more than (or, beside) the Creator, who is blessed forever." "Wherein the apostle," says Waterland, "plainly intimates, that the Creator only is to be served, and that the idolatry of the heathens lay in their worshipping of the creature. He does not blame them for giving sovereign or absolute worship to creatures; they could scarcely be so silly as to imagine there could be more than one supreme

God; but for giving any worship to them at all, sovereign or inferior." (Defence of Queries.) Again: when he mentions it as one of the crimes of the Galatians, previous to their conversion to Christianity, that they "did service unto them which by nature were no gods." he plainly intimates, that no one has a title to religious service but he who is by nature God; and, if so, he himself could not worship or do service to Christ, unless he believed him to possess a natural and essential Divinity.

The practice of the apostles, too, was in strict accordance with this principle. Thus, when worship was offered to St. Peter, by Cornelius, who certainly did not take him to be God, he forbade it: so also Paul and Barnabas forbade it at Lystra, with expressions of horror, when offered to them. An eminent instance is recorded, also, of the exclusion of all creatures, however exalted, from this honor, in Rev. 19:10, where the angel refuses to receive so much as the outward act of adoration, giving this

rule and maxim upon it, "Worship God;" intimating thereby, that God only is to be worshipped; that all acts of religious worship are appropriated to God alone. He does not say, "Worship God, and whom God shall appoint to be worshipped," as if he had appointed any beside God; nor "Worship God with sovereign worship," as if any inferior sort of worship was permitted to be paid to creatures: but simply, plainly, and briefly,

"Worship God."

From the known and avowed religious sentiments, then, of the apostles, both as Jews and as Christians, as well as from their practice, it follows that they could not pay religious worship to Christ, a fact which has already been established, except they had considered him as a Divine person, and themselves as bound, on that account, according to his own words, to honor the Son, even as they honoured the Father.

The Arians, it is true, as hinted above, devised the

doctrine of supreme and inferior worship, and a similar distinction was maintained by Dr. Samuel Clarke, to reconcile the worship of Christ with his semi-Arianism. The same sophistical distinctions are resorted to by Roman Catholics to vindicate the worship of angels, the Virgin Mary, and departed saints. This distinction they express by lapdena and douleia. St. Paul, however, and other sacred writers, and the early fathers, certainly use these terms promiscuously and indifferently, so that the

argument which is founded upon them, in defense of this inferior and subordinate worship, falls to the ground; and, as to all these distinctions of worship into ultimate or supreme, mediate or inferior, Dr Waterland has most forcibly observed, -

1. "I can meet with nothing in Scripture to countenance those fine spun notions. Prayer we often read of; but there is not a syllable about absolute and relative, supreme and inferior prayer. We are commanded to pray

fervently and incessantly; but never sovereignly or absolutely that I know of. We have no rules left us about raising or lowering our intentions, in proportion to the dignity of the objects. Borne instructions to this purpose might have been highly useful; and it is very strange that, in a matter of so great importance, no directions should be given, either in Scripture, or, at least, in antiquity, how to regulate our intentions and meanings, with metaphysical exactness; so as to make our worship

either high, higher, or highest of all, as occasion should require.

2. "But a greater objection against this doctrine is, that the whole tenor of Scripture runs counter to it. This may be understood, in part, from what I have observed above. To make it yet plainer, I shall take into consideration such acts and instances of worship, as I find laid down in Scripture, whether under the old or new dispensation.

"Sacrifice was one instance of worship required under

the law; and it is said, `He that sacrificeth unto any God, save unto the Lord only, he shall be utterly destroyed,' Exod. 22:20. Now suppose any person, considering with himself that only absolute and sovereign sacrifice was appropriated to God, by this law, should have gone and sacrificed to other gods, and have been convicted of it before the judges:- the apology he must have made for it, I suppose, must have run thus:

'Gentlemen, though I have sacrificed to other gods, yet, I hope, you '11 observe, that I did it not absolutely: I meant not any absolute or supreme sacrifice, (which is all that the law forbids,) but relative and inferior only. I regulated my intentions with all imaginable care, and my esteem with the most critical exactness: I considered the other gods, whom I sacrificed to, as inferior only, and infinitely so; reserving all sovereign sacrifice to the supreme God of Israel.' This, or the like apology, must, I

presume, have brought off the criminal, with some applause for his acuteness, if your principles be true. Either you must allow this; or you must be content to say, that not only absolute supreme sacrifice, (if there be any sense in that phrase,) but all sacrifice was, by the law, appropriated to God only.

"Another instance of worship is, making of vows, religious vows. We find as little appearance of your famed distinction here, as in the former case. We read nothing of sovereign and

inferior, absolute and relative vows; that we should imagine supreme vows to be appropriate to God, inferior permitted to angels or idols, or to any creature.

"Swearing is another instance much of the same kind with the foregoing. Swearing by God's name is a plain thing, and well understood: but if you tell us of sovereign and inferior swearing, according to the inward respect or intention you have, in proportion to the dignity of the person by whose name you swear, it

must sound perfectly new to us. All swearing which comes short in its respects, or falls below sovereign, will, I am afraid, be little better than profaneness.

"Such being the case in respect of the acts of religious worship already mentioned, I am now to ask you, what is there so peculiar in the case of invocation and adoration, that they should not be thought of the same kind with the other? Why should not absolute and relative prayer and prostration appear as absurd as

absolute and relative sacrifice, vows, oaths, or the like? They are acts and instances of religious worship, like the other; appropriated to God in the same manner, and by the same laws, and upon the same grounds and reasons. Well then, will you please to consider whether you have not begun at the wrong end, and committed an usteron proteron in your way of thinking. You imagine that acts of religious worship are to derive their signification and quality from the intention and meaning of

the worshippers; whereas the very reverse of it is the truth. Their meaning and signification is fixed and determined by God himself; and therefore we are never to use them with any other meaning, under peril of profaneness or idolatry. God has not left us at liberty to fix what sense we please upon religious worship, to render it high or low, absolute or relative, at discretion, supreme when offered to God, and if to others inferior: as when to angels, or saints, or images, in suitable proportion. No: religion

was not made for metaphysical heads only; such as might nicely distinguish the several degrees and elevations of respect and honor among many objects. The short and plain way, which (in pity to human infirmity, and to prevent confusion,) it has pleased God to take with us, is to make all religious worship his own; and so it is sovereign of course. This I take to be the true Scriptural, as well as only reasonable account of the object of worship. We need not concern ourselves (it is but vain to pretend to

it) about determining the sense and meaning of religious worship. God himself has taken care of it; and it is already fixed and determined to our hands. It means, whether we will or no, it means, by Divine institution and appointment, the divinity, the supremacy, the sovereignty of its object. To misapply those marks of dignity, those appropriate ensigns of Divine majesty; to compliment any creature with them, and thereby to make common what God has made proper, is to deify the works of God's hands,

and to serve the creature instead of the Creator, God blessed forever. We have no occasion to talk of sovereign, absolute prayers, and such other odd fancies: prayer is an address to God, and does not admit of those novel distinctions. In short then, here is no room left for your distinguishing between sovereign and inferior adoration. You must first prove, what you have hitherto presumed only, and taken for granted, that you are at liberty to fix what meaning and signification you

please to the acts of religious worship; to make them high or low at discretion. This you will find a very difficult undertaking. Scripture is beforehand with you: and, to fix it more, the concurring judgment of the earliest and best Christian writers. All religious worship is hereby determined to be what you call absolute and sovereign. Inferior or relative worship appears now to be contradiction in sense, as it is novel in sound; like an inferior or relative God." (Defence of Queries.)

These absurdities have, at length, been discovered by Socinians themselves, who, notwithstanding the authority of Socinus, have, at length, become, in this respect, consistent; and, as they deny the Divinity of our Lord, so they refuse him worship, and do not "honor the Son as they honor the Father." Their refusal to do so must be left to him who hath said, "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way;" but, though they have not shunned error, they have, at least, by refusing all worship to

Christ, escaped from hypocrisy Numerous other passages in the New Testament, in addition to those on which some remarks have been offered, might be adduced, in which the Divinity of our Lord is expressly taught, and which might be easily rescued from that discreditable and unscholarly criticism, by which Socinian writers have attempted to darken their evidence. It has, however, been my object rather to adduce passages which directly support the arguments in the order in

which they have been adduced, than to collect those which are more insulated. All of them ought, however, to be consulted by the careful student; and, indeed, from many texts of this description, which appear to be but incidentally introduced, the evidence that the doctrine of the Godhead of Christ was taught by the apostles, is presented to us with this impressive circumstance, that the inspired writers of the New Testament all along assume it as a point which was never, in that

age, questioned by true Christians. It influenced, therefore, the turn of their language, and established a theological style among them when speaking of Christ, which cannot possibly be reconciled to any hypothesis which excludes his essential Deity; and which no honest, or even rational, men could have fallen into, unless they had acknowledged and worshipped their Master as God.

Out of this numerous class of passages, one will suffice for illustration.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation," &c, Philip. 2:5-7. Here the apostle is recommending an humble and benevolent disposition to the Philippians; and he enforces it, not certainly by considerations which themselves needed to be established by proof, or in which the Philippians had

not been previously instructed, but in the most natural manner, and that only which a good writer could adopt, by what was already established, and received as true among them. It was already admitted by the Philippians as an undoubted verity of the Christian religion, that before Christ appeared in "the form of a servant," he existed "in the form of God," and before he was "found in fashion as a man," he was such a being as could not think it "robbery to be equal with

God." On these very grounds the example of Christ is proposed to his followers, and its imitation enforced upon them. This incidental and familiar manner of introducing so great a subject, clearly shows that the Divinity of Christ was a received doctrine; but, though introduced incidentally, the terms employed by the apostle are as strong and unequivocal as if he had undertaken formally to propose it. It is not necessary to show this by going through that formidable mass of verbal

criticism which commentators, scholiasts, and other critics, have accumulated around this passage. Happily as to this, as well as many other important texts which form the bases of the great dogmata of Christianity, much less is left to verbal criticism than many have supposed; the various clauses, together with the connection, so illustrate and guard the meaning as to fix their sense, and make it obvious to the general reader.

"Who being" or "subsisting in the form of God." This is the first character of Christ's exalted pre-existent state, and it is adduced as the ground of a claim which, for a season, he divested himself of, and became, therefore, an illustrious example of humility and charity. The greatness of Christ is first laid down, then what he renounced of that which was due to his greatness, and finally the condition is introduced to which he stooped or humbled himself. "He thought it not robbery to be equal with

God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant." These are, obviously, the three great points in this celebrated text, to the consideration of which we are strictly bound by the apostle's argument. Let each be briefly considered, and it will be seen how impossible it is to explain this passage in any way which does not imply our Lord's essential Divinity. To be or to subsist in "the form of God," is to be truly and essentially God. This may, indeed, be argued from the word

morphe, though some have confined its meaning to external form or appearance. The Socinian exposition, that "the form of God" signifies his power of working miracles, needs no other refutation than that the apostle here speaks of what our Lord was before he took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. The notion, too, of Whitby and others, who refer it to the visible glory of God, in which he appeared to the patriarchs, is also disproved by this manifest

consideration, that the phrase "subsisting (huparcho) in the form of God," describes the permanent preexistent state of Christ. He subsisted in the form of God, therefore, from eternity, and consequently before he made any visibly glorious manifestations of himself to the patriarchs; nor, as God is invisible and immaterial, and consequently has no likeness of figure, could our Lord, in their sense, "subsist"

in the form or appearance of God. If, indeed, "form" means likeness, it must be intellectual likeness, and, therefore, to subsist in the form of God is to be God, for he could not be the likeness of God, or, as the apostle has it in the Hebrews, the "express image" or character of his person, without being God; for how could he be expressly like, or expressly resemble, or have the appearance of omnipotence, if he were not himself almighty; or of omniscience, if not himself all-knowing? Let us then

allow that morphe in its leading sense has the signification of form, shape, image, and similitude, (8) yet this can only be applied to the Divine Being figuratively. He has no sensible form, no appearance, and nothing can be in this form or image, therefore, but what has the same essential properties and perfections. " Sed age," says Elsner,

"largiamur Socinianis morphee des speciem et imaginem Dei esse, tamen valido inde argumento

docebimus; Deum esse natura, qui in forma et imagine Dei exisleret; nisi Deum personatum, et cornmentitium, qui speciern quidem et psantasma haberet veritate carens, credere et adorare malint." (Observationes Sacrae in loc.) But it is not true, as some have hastily stated, that morphe signifies only the outward form of anything; it is used in Greek authors for the essential form, or nature itself of a thing, of which examples may be seen in Wetstein, Elsner, Rosenmuller, Schleusner,

and others; and accordingly Schleusner explains it "per metonymiam; ipsa natura et essentia alicujus rei" and adds, "sic legitur in N. T. Philip, 2:6, ubi Christus dicitur en morphe Theos huparcho ad designandam sublimiorem ipsius naturam." The Greek fathers also understood morphe in the sense of ousia, and to use the phrase "being in the form of God," to signify the "being really and truly God.

(8) "1. Forma, externus, habitus, omno quod in

oculos occurrit, imago, similitude." (Schleusner) Thus the term itself is sufficiently explicit of the doctrine; but the context would decide the matter, were the verbal criticism less decidedly in favor of this interpretation. "The form of God"

stands opposed to "the form of a servant." This, say those critics who would make the form of God an external appearance only, means "the appearance and behavior of a bondsman or slave, and not the essence of such a person." But

doulos, a slave, is not in the New Testament taken in the same opprobrious sense as among us. St. Paul calls himself "the slave of "Jesus Christ," and our translators have, therefore, properly rendered the word by servant, as more exactly conveying the meaning intended. Now it is certain, that Christ was the servant or minister both of the Father and of his creatures. He himself declares, that he came not "to be ministered unto, but to minister;" and as to be in the form of a servant is not, therefore, to have the

appearance of a servant, but to be really a servant, so to be in the form of God is to be really God. This is rendered still stronger by the following clause, which is exegetic of the preceding, as will appear from the literal rendering, the force of which is obscured by the copulative introduced into the common version. It is not, "and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men," but "being made in the likeness of men," which clearly denotes that he took the form of a servant by "being made in the likeness

of men," so that, as Bishop Pearson irresistibly argues,

"The phrase 'in the form of God,' not elsewhere mentioned, is used by the apostle with respect unto that other, of 'the form of a servant,' exegetically continued ' in the likeness of men;' and the respect of one unto the other is so necessary, that if the form of God be not real and essential as the form of a servant, or the likeness of man, there is no force in the apostle's words, nor will his argument be fit to work any great degree of

humiliation upon the consideration of Christ's exinanition. But by the form is certainly understood the true condition of a servant, and by the likeness is infallibly meant the real nature of man: nor doth the fashion, in which he was found, destroy, but rather assert the truth of his humanity. And therefore, as sure as Christ was really and essentially man, of the same nature with us, in whose similitude he was made; so certainly was he also really and essentially God, of the same nature

and being with him, in whose form he did subsist." (Discourses on the Creed.)

The greatness of him who "humbled himself" being thus laid down by the apostle, he proceeds to state what, in the process of his humiliation, he waived of that which was due to his greatness.

He "thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation;" or, as many choose to render it, "he emptied himself." Whether the clause, "thought it not robbery," be translated

"esteemed it not an object to be caught at, or eagerly desired, to be as God," or did not think it a "usurpation;" or, as our translators have it, a "robbery" to be equal with God, signifies little; for, after all the criticism expended on this unusual phrase, that Christ had a right to that which he might have retained, but chose to waive when he humbled himself, is sufficiently established both by the meaning of the word and by the connection itself. Some Socinians allow the

common translation, and their own version is to the same effect. - he "did not esteem it a prey" which can only mean, though they attempt to cloud the matter in their note, that he did not esteem that as his own property to which he had no right. (9) That, then, which he did not account a "prey" a seizure of another's right or property, was "to be equal with God." Whether, in the phrase t= efnai fsa Theo=, to be equal with God, isa is to be taken adverbially, and translated as, like as, GOD; or, by enallage, for the singular

adjective masculine, and to be rendered equal to God, has been matter of dispute. The grammatical authority appears to predominate in favor of the latter, (1) and it is supported by several of the fathers and the ancient versions; but here, again, we are not left to the niceties of verbal criticism. If taken in either way, the sense is much the same: he thought it not a robbery, or usurpation, to be equal with God or, as God, which, as the sense determines, was an equality of honor and dignity; but made himself of no reputation.

For as the phrase, the form of God, signifies his essential Divinity, so that of which he "emptied"

or divested himself for the time was something to which he had a right consequent upon his Divinity; and if to be equal with God, or to be as God, was his right, as a Divine person, it was not anything which he was essentially of which he divested himself, for that were impossible, but something which, if he had not been God, it would have been a robbery and usurpation either to claim

or retain. This, then, can be nothing else than the assumption of a Divine majesty and glory the proclamation of his own rights, and the demand of his creatures' praise and homage, the laying aside of which, indeed, is admirably expressed in our translation, "but made himself of no reputation!" This is also established by the antithesis in the text. "The form of a servant" stands opposed to "the form of God," - a real servant to real Divinity; and to be "equal" with God, or, as God, in glory, honor,

and homage, is contrasted with the humiliations of a human state. "In that state he was made flesh, sent in the likeness of sinful flesh, subject to the infirmities and miseries of this life; in that state he was "made of a woman, made under the law," and so obliged to fulfill the same; in that state he was born, and lived to manhood in a mean condition: was

"despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;" in that state, being thus made* man, he took upon

him "the form of a servant." If any man doubt how Christ emptied himself, the text will satisfy him, - "by taking the form of a servant:" if any still question how he took the form of a servant, he hath the apostle's solution, - "by being made in the likeness of men." And being found in fashion as a man; being already by his exinanition, in the form of a servant, he humbled himself, becoming "obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

(Bishop Pearson.) The first stage of his humiliation was his assuming "the form of a servant;" the completion of it, his "obedience unto death." But what say the Socinians? As with them to be in the form of God means to be invested with miraculous powers, so to empty or divest himself, was his not exerting those powers in order to prevent his crucifixion. The truth, however, is, that he "emptied" himself, not at his crucifixion, but when he took upon him the form of a servant, and was made

in the likeness of men; so that, if to divest or empty himself be explained of laying down his miraculous gifts, he laid them down before he became man, that is, according to them, before he had any existence. There is no alternative, in this and many similar passages, between orthodoxy and the most glaring critical absurdity.

(9) "Non rapinam, aut spolium alicui, detractum, duxit." (Rosenmuller.) So the ancient versions.

"Non rapinam arbitratus est." (Vulgate.) "Non rapinam hoc existimavit." (Syriac.) (I) See Pearson on the Creed, Art. 2, note; Schleusner, Erasmus, and Schmidt.

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36 HUMANITY OF CHRIST - HYPOSTATIC UNION - ERRORS AS TO THE PERSON OF CHRIST

In the present day, the controversy as to the person of Christ is almost wholly confined to the

question of his Divinity; but, in the early ages of the Church, it was necessary to establish his proper humanity. The denial of this appears to have existed as early as the time of St. John, who, in his epistles, excludes from the pale of the Church all who denied that Christ was come in the flesh. As his Gospel, therefore, proclaims the Godhead, so his epistles defend also the doctrine of his humanity.

The source of this ancient error appears to have been a philosophical one. Both

in the oriental and Greek schools, it was a favorite notion, that whatever was joined to matter was necessarily contaminated by it, and that the highest perfection of this life was abstraction from material things, and, in another, a total and final separation from the body. This opinion was, also, the probable cause of leading some persons, in St. Paul's time, to deny the reality of a resurrection, and to explain it figuratively. But, however that may be, it was one of the chief grounds of the rejection of

the proper humanity of Christ among the different branches of the Gnostics, who, indeed, erred as to both natures. The things which the Scriptures attribute to the human nature of our Lord hey did not deny; but affirmed that they took place in appearance only, and they were, therefore, called Docetae and Phantasiastae. At a later period, Eutyches fell into a similar error, by teaching that the human nature of Christ was absorbed into the Divine, and that his body had no real existence. These errors

have passed away, and danger now lies only on one side; not, indeed, because men are become less liable or less disposed to err, but because philosophy, -

from vain pretences to which, or a proud reliance upon it, almost all great religious errors spring,

- has, in later ages, taken a different character.

While these errors denied the real existence of the body of Christ, the Apolloninarian heresy rejected the existence of a

human soul in our Lord, and taught that the Godhead supplied its place. Thus both these views denied to Christ a proper humanity, and both were, accordingly, condemned by the general Church.

Among those who held the union of two natures in Christ, the Divine and human, which, in theological language is called the hypostatical, or personal union, several distinctions were also made which led to a diversity of opinion. The Nestorians acknowledged

two persons in our Lord, mystically and more closely united than any human analogy can explain. The Monophysites contended for one person and one nature, the two being supposed to be, in some mysterious manner, confounded. The Monothehtes acknowledged two natures and one will. Various other refinements were, at different times, propagated; but the true sense of Scripture appears to have been very accurately expressed by the council of Chalcedon, in

the fifth century, - that in Christ there is one person; in the unity of person, two natures, the Divine and the human; and that there is no change, or mixture, or confusion of these two natures, but that each retains its own distinguishing properties. With this agrees the Athanasian Creed, whatever be its date, - "Perfect God and perfect man, of a reasonable soul, and human flesh subsisting-Who although he be God and man, yet he is not two; but one Christ: one, not by conversion of

the Godhead into flesh; but by taking the manhood into God; one altogether, not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person; for as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ." The Church of England, by adopting this creed, has adopted its doctrine on the hypostatical union, and has farther professed it in her second article. "The Son, which is the Word of the Father, begotten from everlasting of the Father, the very and eternal God, of one substance with the Father, took man's nature

in the womb of the blessed virgin of her substance, so that the two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and manhood, were joined together in one person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God and very man."

Whatever objections may be raised against these views by the mere reason of man, unable to comprehend mysteries so high, but often bold enough to impugn them, they certainly exhibit the doctrine of the New

Testament on these important subjects, though expressed in different terms.

Nor are these formularies to be charged with originating such distinctions, and adding them to the simplicity of Scripture, as they often unjustly are by those who, either from lurking errors in their own minds, or from a vain affectation of being independent of human authority, are most prone to question them. Such expositions of faith were rendered necessary by

the dangerous speculations and human refinements to which we have above adverted; and were intended to be (what they may be easily proved from Scripture to be in reality) summaries of inspired doctrines; not new distinctions, but declarations of what had been before taught by the Holy Spirit on the subject of the hypostatical union of natures in Christ; and the accordance of these admirable summaries with the Scriptures themselves will be very obvious to all who yield to their plain and

unperverted testimony. That Christ is very God, has been already proved from the Scriptures, at considerable length; that he was truly a man, no one will be found to doubt; that he is but one person, is sufficiently clear from this, that no distinction into two was ever made by himself, or by his apostles, and from actions peculiar to Godhead being sometimes ascribed to him under his human appellations; and actions and sufferings peculiar to humanity being also predicated of him under Divine titles. That in

him there is no confusion of the two natures, is evident from the absolute manner in which both his natures are constantly spoken of in the Scriptures. His Godhead was not deteriorated by uniting itself with a human body, for "he is the true God;" his humanity was not, while on earth, exalted into properties which made it different in kind to the humanity of his creatures; for, "as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also took part of the same." If the Divine nature in him had been

imperfect, it would have lost its essential character, for it is essential to Deity to be perfect and complete; if any of the essential properties of human nature had been wanting, he would not have been man; if, as some of the preceding notions implied, Divine and human had been mixed and confounded in him, He would have been a compounded being, neither God nor man. Nothing was deficient in his humanity, nothing in his Divinity, and yet he is one Christ. This is clearly the doctrine of the Scripture, and it is

admirably expressed in the creeds above quoted; and, on that account, they are entitled to great respect.

They embody the sentiments of some of the greatest men that ever lived in the Church, in language weighed with the utmost care and accuracy; and they are venerable records of the faith of distant ages.

These two circumstances, the completeness of each nature, and the union of both in one person, is the only key to the language of the New Testament, and so

entirely explains and harmonizes the whole as to afford the strongest proof, next to its explicit verbal statements, of the doctrine that our Lord is at once truly God and truly man. On the other hand, the impracticability of giving a consistent explanation of the testimony of God "concerning his Son Jesus Christ" on all other hypotheses, entirely confutes them. In one of two ways only will it be found, by everyone who makes the trial honestly, that all the passages of holy writ respecting the person

of Christ can be explained; either by referring them, according to the rule of the ancient fathers, to the Theologia, by which they meant everything that related to the Divinity of our Savior; or to the Oikonomia, by which they meant his incarnation, and everything that he did in the flesh to procure the salvation of mankind. This distinction is expressed in modern theological language, by considering some things which are spoken of Christ, as said of his Divine, others of his human nature; and he who

takes this principle of interpretation along with him will seldom find any difficulty in apprehending the sense of the sacred writers, though the subjects themselves be often, to human minds, inscrutable.

Does anyone ask, for instance, if Jesus Christ was truly God, how he could be born and die?

how he could grow in wisdom and stature? how he could be subject to law? be tempted? stand in need of prayer? how his soul could be "exceeding

sorrowful even unto death?"be "forsaken of his Father?" purchase the Church with "his own blood?" have "a joy set before him?" be exalted?

have you all power in heaven and earth" given to him? &c. The answer is that he was also man.

If, on the other hand, it be a matter of surprise, that a visible man should heal diseases at his will, and without referring to any higher authority, as he often did; still the winds and the waves; know the thoughts of men's hearts;

foresee his own passion in all its circumstances; authoritatively forgive sins; be exalted to absolute dominion over every creature in heaven and earth; be present wherever two or three are gathered in his name; be with his disciples to the end of the world; claim universal homage and the bowing of the knee of all creatures to his name; be associated with the Father in solemn ascriptions of glory and thanksgiving, and bear even the awful names of God, names of description and revelation, names

which express Divine attributes:- what is the answer? Can the Socinian scheme, which allows him to be a man only, produce a reply? Can it furnish a reasonable interpretation of texts of sacred writ which affirm all these things? Can it suggest any solution which does not imply that the sacred penmen were not only careless writers, but writers who, if they had studied to be misunderstood, could not more delusively have expressed themselves? The only hypothesis, explanatory of all these

statements, is, that Christ is God as well as man, and by this the consistency of the sacred writers is brought out, and a harmonizing strain of sentiment is seen compacting the Scriptures into one agreeing and mutually adjusted revelation.

But the union of the two natures in Christ in one hypostasis, or person, is equally essential to the full exposition of the Scriptures, as the existence of two distinctively, the Divine and the human; and

with-out it many passages lose all force, because they lose all meaning. In what possible sense could it be said of the word, that "he was made (or became) flesh," if no such personal unity existed? The Socinians themselves seem to acknowledge the force of this, and therefore translate "and the Word was flesh," affirming falsely, as various critics have abundantly shown, that the most usual meaning of ginomai is to be. Without the hypostatical union, how could the argument of our

Lord be supported, that the Messiah is both David's sun and David's lord? If this is asserted of two persons, then the argument, is gone; if of one, then two natures, one which had authority as Lord, and the other capable of natural descent, were united in one person. Allowing that we have established it, that the appellative "Son of God" is the designation of a Divine relation, but for this personal union the visible Christ could not be, according to St. Peter's confession, "the Son of the

living God." By this doctrine we also learn how it was that "the Church of God" was "purchased by his own blood." Even if we concede the genuine reading to be "the Lord," this concession yields nothing to the Socinians, unless the term lord were a human title, which has been already disproved, and unless a mere man could be "lord both of the dead and the living," could wield universal sovereignty, and be entitled to universal homage. If, then, the title "the lord" be an appellation of Christ's

superior nature, in no other sense could it be said that the Church was purchased by his own blood, than by supposing the existence of that union which we call personal; a union which alone distinguishes the sufferings of Christ from that of his martyred followers, gave to them a merit which theirs had not, and made "his blood" capable of purchasing the salvation of the "Church." For, disallow that union, and we can see no possible meaning in calling the blood of Christ "the blood of God," or, if it

please better, "of the Lord;" or in what that great peculiarity consisted which made it capable of purchasing or redeeming.

Dr. Pye Smith, in his very able work on the person of Christ, has rather inconsiderately blamed the orthodox, for "the very serious offence of sometimes using language which applies to the Divine nature the circumstances and properties which could only attach to his humanity," as giving unhappy occasion to the objections and derisions of

their opponents. As he gives no instances, he had his eye, probably, upon some extreme cases; but if he meant it as a remark of general application, it seems to have arisen from a very mistaken view, and assumes, that the objections of opponents lie rather against terms than against the doctrine of Christ's Divinity itself.

This is so far from being the case, that, if the orthodox were to attend to the caution given by this writer on this subject, they would not approach one

step nearer to the conversion of those who are in this fundamental error, supporting it, as they do, by perversions so manifest, and by criticisms so shameless. I am no apologist, however, of real "errors and faults" in theological language; but the practice referred to, so far from being "a serious offence," has the authority of the writers of the New Testament.

Argumeriatively, the distinction between the Divine and human natures, according to the rule before given, must be maintained;

but when speaking cursorily, and on the assumption of the unquestionable truth of the hypostatic union of the Divine and human natures, - a manner of speaking, which, it is hoped, all true Christians adopt, as arising from their settled convictions on this point, - those very terms, so common among the orthodox, and so objectionable to those who "deny the Lord that bought them," must be maintained in spite of "derision," or the language of the New Testament must be

dropped, or at least be made very select, if this dangerous, and in the result, this betraying courtesy be adopted.

For what does Dr. P. Smith gain, when cautioning the believer against the use of the phrase "the blood of God," by reminding him that there is reason to prefer the reading, "the Church of the Lord, which he hath purchased by his own Hood?" The orthodox contend, that the appellation

"the lord," when applied to our Savior, is his title as

God, and the heterodox know, also, that the

"blood of the Lord" is a phrase with us entirely equivalent to "the blood of God." They know, too, that we neither believe that "God" nor "the lord" could die; but in using the established phrase, the all-important doctrine of the existence of such a union between the two natures of our Lord as to make the blood which he shed more than the blood of a mere man, more than the blood of his mere humanity itself, is maintained and

exhibited; and while we allow that God could not die, yet that there is a most important sense in which the blood of Christ was "the blood of God."

We do not attempt to explain this mystery, but we find it on record; and, in point of fact, that careful appropriation of the properties of the two natures to each respectively, which Dr. Pye Smith recommends, is not very frequent in the New Testament, and for this obvious reason, that the question of our Lord's

Divinity is more generally introduced as an indisputed principle, than argued upon. It is true, that the Apostle Paul lays it down, that our Lord was of the seed of David, "according to the flesh," and "the Son of God, according to the spirit of holiness." Here is an instance of the distinction; but generally this is not observed by the apostles, because the equally fundamental doctrine was always present to them, that the same person who was flesh was also truly God. Hence they scruple

not to say, that "the Lord of glory was crucified," that "the Prince of life was killed," and that he who was "in the form of God," became "obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

We return, from this digression, to notice a few other passages, the meaning of which can only be opened by the doctrine of the personal union of the Divine and human natures in Christ. "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily," Col. 2:9; not by a type and

figure, but, as the word somatikos signifies really and substantially, and for the full exposition, we must add, by personal union; for we have no other idea by which to explain an expression never used to signify the inhabitation of good men by God, and which is here applied to Christ in a way of eminence and peculiarity. (2)

(2) Somatikos, h. e. vere, perfectissime, non typice, et umbraliter, sicut in V. T. Deus so manifestavit. Est autem inhabitatio ilia et

unio personalis, et singularissima." (Glassius.)

"Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high," Heb. 1:3. To this passage, also, the hypostatical union is the only key. Of whom does the apostle speak, when he says, "when he had by himself purged our sins,"

but of Him who is "the brightness of his glory, and

the express image of his person?" he, by himself, "purged our sins;" yet this was done by the shedding of his blood. In that higher nature, however, he could not suffer death; and nothing could make the sufferings of his humanity a purification of sins by himself, but such a union as should constitute one person:- for, unless this be allowed, either the characters of Divinity in the preceding verses are characters of a merely human being; or else that higher nature was capable of suffering death; or, if

not, the purification was not made by himself, which yet the text affirms.

In fine, all passages which (not to mention many others) come under the following classes have their true interpretation thus laid open, and are generally utterly unmeaning on any other hypothesis.

1. Those which, like some of the foregoing, speak of the efficacy of the sufferings of Christ for the remission of sins. In this class the two following may be given as examples. Heb. 2:14,

"Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death," &c. Here the efficacy of the death of Christ is explicitly stated; but as explicitly is it said to be the death of one who partook of flesh and blood, or who assumed human nature. The power of deliverance is ascribed to him who thus invested himself with a nature below that of his own

original nature; but in that lower nature

he dies, and by that death he delivers those who had been all their lifetime subject to bondage.

The second is Colossians 1:14, &c, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, who is the image of the invisible God," &c. In this passage, the lofty description which is given of the person of Christ stands in immediate connection with the mention of the efficacy of "his blood," and is to be

considered as the reason why, through that blood, redemption and remission of sins became attainable. Thus "without shedding of blood there could be no remission;" but the blood of Jesus only is thus efficacious, who is "the image of the invisible God," the "Creator" of all things. His blood it could not be but for the hypostatical union; and it is equally true, that but for that he could have had no blood to shed; because, as "the image of the invisible God," that is, God's equal, or God

himself, his nature was incapable of death.

2. In the second class are all those passages which argue from the compassion which our Lord manifested in his humiliation, and his own experience of sufferings, to the exercise of confidence in him by his people in dangers and afflictive circumstances. Of these the following may be given for the sake of illustration. Heb. 4:15, 16, "For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in

all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us, therefore, come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Several similar passages occur in the early part of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the argument of them all is precisely the same. The humiliation of our Lord, and his acquaintance with human woes, may assure us of his sympathy; but sympathy is not help. He is represented, therefore, as the source of "succor" as the "Author of salvation"

"the Captain of our salvation" in consequence of the sufferings he endured; and to him all his people are directed to fly for aid in prayer, and by entire trust in his power, grace, and presence, to assure themselves that timely succor and final salvation shall be bestowed upon them by him.

Now here, also, it is clear, that the sufferer and the Savior are the same person. The man might suffer; but sufferings could not enable the man to save; they could give no new qualification to

human nature, nor bestow upon that nature any new right. But, beside the nature which suffered, and learned the bitterness of human woes by experience, there is a nature which can know the sufferings of all others, in all places, at all times; which can also ascertain the "time of need"

with exactness, and the "grace" suitable to it; which can effectually "help" and sustain the sorrows of the very heart, a power peculiar to Divinity, and

finally bestow "eternal salvation."

This must be Divine; but it is one in personal union with that which suffered and was taught sympathy, and it is this union constitutes that "great high priest" of our profession, that "merciful and faithful High Priest," who is able "to succor us when we are tempted." Thus, as it has been well observed on this subject, "It is by the union of two natures in one person that Christ is qualified to be the Savior of the world. He became man,

that, with the greatest possible advantage to those whom he was sent to instruct, he might teach them the nature and the will of God; that his life might be their example; that by being once compassed with the infirmities of human nature, he might give them assurance of his fellow feeling; that by suffering on the cross he might make atonement for their sins; and that in his reward they might behold the earnest and the pattern of theirs.

"But had Jesus been only man, or had he been one of the spirits that surround the throne of God, he could not have accomplished the work which he undertook: for the whole obedience of every creature being due to the Creator, no part of that obedience can be placed to the account of other creatures, so as to supply the defects of their service, or to rescue them from the punishment which they deserve. The Scriptures, therefore, reveal, that he who appeared upon earth as man, is also God, and as God, was mighty to save;

and by this revelation they teach us, that the merit of our Lord's obedience, and the efficacy of his interposition, depend upon the hypostatical union.

"All modern sects of Christians agree in admitting that the greatest benefits arise to us from the Savior of the world being man; but the Arians and Socinians contend earnestly, that his sufferings do not derive any value from his being God; and their reasoning is specious. You say, they argue, that Jesus Christ,

who suffered for the sins of men, is both God and man. You must either say that God suffered, or that he did not suffer: if you say that God suffered, you do indeed affix an infinite value to the sufferings; but you affirm that the Godhead is capable of suffering, which is both impious and absurd: if you say that God did not suffer, then, although the person that suffered had both a Divine and a human nature, the sufferings were merely those of a man, for, according to your own system, the two natures are

distinct, and the Divine is impassible.

"In answer to this method of arguing, we may admit that the Godhead cannot suffer, and we do not pretend to explain the kind of support which the human nature derived, under its sufferings, from the Divine, or the manner in which the two were united. But from the uniform language of Scripture, which magnifies the love of God in giving his only-begotten Son, which speaks in the highest terms of the preciousness

of the blood of Christ, which represents him as coming, in the body that was prepared for him, to do that which sacrifice and burnt offering could not do: from all this we infer that there was a value, a merit, in the sufferings of this person, superior to that which belonged to the sufferings of any other: and as the same Scriptures intimate, in numberless places, the strictest union between the Divine and human nature of Christ, by applying to him promiscuously the actions which belong to each

nature, we hold that it is impossible for us to separate in our imagination, this peculiar value which they affix to his sufferings from the peculiar dignity of his person.

"The hypostatical union, then, is the corner stone of our religion. We are too much accustomed, in all our researches, to perceive that things are united, without our being able to investigate the bond which unites them, to feel any degree of surprise that we cannot answer all the

questions which ingenious men have proposed upon this subject; but we can clearly discern, in those purposes of the incarnation of the Son of God which the Scriptures declare, the reason why they have dwelt so largely upon his Divinity; and if we are careful to take into our view the whole of that description which they give of the person by whom the remedy in the Gospel was brought; if, in our speculations concerning him, we neither lose sight of the two parts which are clearly revealed, nor forget,

what we cannot comprehend, that union between the two parts which is necessarily implied in the revelation of them, we shall perceive, in the character of the Messiah, a completeness and a suitableness to the design of his coming, which of themselves create a strong presumption that we have rightly interpreted the Scriptures." (Dr. Hill.) On this evidence from the Holy Scriptures the doctrine of the Divinity of our blessed Savior rests. Into the argument from antiquity my limits will not

allow me to enter. If the great "falling away," predicted by St. Paul, had involved, generally, this high doctrine; if both the Latin and Greek Churches had wholly departed from the faith, instead of having united, without intermission, to say, "Thou art the King of glory, O Christ," "Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father," the truth of God would not have been made of "none effect." God would still have been true, though every man, from the age of inspiration, had become "a liar." The Socinians have,

of late years, shown great anxiety to obtain some suffrages from antiquity in their favor, and have collected every instance possible of early departure from the faith. They might, indeed, have found heretical pravity and its adherents, without traveling out of the New Testament; men not only near the apostolic age, but in the very days of the apostles, who rejected the resurrection, who consented not "to wholesome doctrine," who made "shipwreck of faith," as well as of a good

conscience, who denied "the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ," "the Lord that bought them." This kind of antiquity is, in truth, in their favor; and, as human nature is substantially the same in all ages, there is as much reason to expect errors in one age as another; but that any body of Christians, in any sense entitled to be considered as an acknowledged branch of the Church of Christ, can be found, in primitive times, to give any sanction to their opinions and interpretations of

Scripture, they have failed to establish. For full information on the subject of the opinions of the primitive Churches, and a full refutation of all the pretences which Arians and Socinians, in these later times, have made to be, in part, supported by primitive authority, the works of Bishop Bull, Dr. Waterland, and Bishop Horsley, (3) must be consulted; and the result will show, that in the interpretation of the Scriptures given above, we are supported by the successive and according

testimonies of all that is truly authoritative in those illustrious ages which furnished so many imperishable writings for the edification of the future Church, and so many martyrs and confessors of "the truth as it is in Jesus."

(3) See also Wilson's Illustration of the Method of explaining the New Testament by the early Opinions of Jews and Christians concerning Christ; and Dr. Jamieson's Vindication, &c.

Among the numerous errors, with respect to the

person of our Lord, which formerly sprung up in the Church, and were opposed, with an ever watchful zeal, by its authorities, three only can be said to have much influence in the present day, Arianism, Sabellianism, and Socinianism. In our own country, the two former are almost entirely merged in the last, whose characteristic is the tenet of the simple humanity of Christ. arius, who gave his name to the first, seems to have wrought some of the floating errors of previous times into a kind of system,

which, however, underwent various modifications among his followers. The distinguishing tenet of this system was, that Christ was the first and most exalted of creatures; that he was produced in a peculiar manner, and endowed with great perfections; that by him God made the world; that he alone proceeded immediately from God, while other things were produced immediately by him, and that all things were put under his administration. The semi-Arians divided from the Arians, but still differed

from the orthodox, in refusing to admit that the Son was homoousios, or of the same substance with the Father; but acknowledged him to be homoiousios, of a like substance with the Father. It was only, however, in appearance that they came nearer to the truth than the Arians themselves, for they contended that this likeness to the Father in essence was not by nature, but by peculiar privilege. In their system Christ, therefore, was but a creature. A still farther refinement on this doctrine

was, in this country, advocated by Dr. Samuel Clarke, which Dr.

Waterland, his great and illustrious opponent, showed, notwithstanding the orthodox terms employed, still implied that Christ was a created being, unless an evident absurdity were admitted. (4)

(4) Dr. Samuel Clarke's hypothesis was, that there is one Supreme Being, who is the Father, and two subordinate, derived, and dependent beings. But he objected to call Christ a creature, thinking him

something between a created and a self-existent nature. Dr. C. appealed to the fathers; and Petavius, a learned Jesuit, in his Dogmata Theologica, had previously endeavored to prove that the ante-Nicene fathers leaned to Arianism. Bishop Bull, in his great work on this subject, and Dr. Waterland may be considered as having fully put that question to rest in opposition to both.

The Sabellian doctrine stands equally opposed to trinitarianism and to the Arian system. It asserts the

Divinity of the Son and the Spirit against the latter, and denies the personality of both, in opposition to the former. Sabellius taught that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are only denominations of one hypostasis; in other words, that there is but one person in the Godhead, and that the Son or Word are virtues, emanations, or functions only: that, under the Old Testament God delivered the law as Father; under the New, dwelt among men, or was incarnate, as the Son; and descended on the apostles

as the Spirit. Because their scheme, by denying a real Sonship, obliged them to acknowledge that it was the Father who suffered for the sins of men, the Sabellians were often, in the early ages, called Patripassians.

On the refutation of these errors it is not necessary to dwell, both because they have now little influence, and chiefly because both are involved in the Socinian question, and are decided by the establishment of the Scriptural doctrine of a trinity of Divine persons in

the unity of the Godhead. If Jesus Christ be the Divine Son of God; if he was "sent" from God, and "returned" to God; if he distinguished himself from the Father both in his Divine and human nature, saying, as to the former, "I and my Father are one," and as to the latter, "My Father is greater than I;" if there be any meaning at all in his declaration," that no man knoweth the Son but the Father, and no man knoweth the Father but the Son," words which cannot, by any possibility, be spoken of an official

distinction, or of an emanation or operation; then all these passages prove a real personality, and are incapable of being explained by a modal one. This is the answer to the Sabellian opinion; and as to the Arian hypothesis-, it falls, with Socinianism, before that series of proofs which has already been adduced from Holy Writ, to establish the eternity, consubstantiality, coequality, and, consequently, w the proper Divinity of our Redeemer; and, perhaps, the true reason why not even the

semi-Arianism, argued with so much subtlety by Dr.

Samuel Clarke, has been able to retain any influence among us, is less to be attributed to the able and learned writings of Dr. Waterland and others, who chased the error through all its changeful transformations, than to the manifest impossibility of conceiving of a being which is neither truly God nor a creature; and the total absence of all countenance in the Scriptures, however

tortured, in favor of this opinion. Socinianism assumes plausibility in some of its aspects, because Christ was really a man; but semi-Arianism is a mere hypothesis, which can scarcely find a text of Scripture to pervert.

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37 THE PERSONALITY AND DEITY OF THE HOLY GHOST

The discussion of this great point of Christian doctrine may be included in much narrower limits than those

I have assigned to the Divinity of Christ, so many of the principles on which it rests having been closely considered, and because the Deity of the Spirit, in several instances, inevitably follows from that of the Son. As the object of this work is to educe the doctrine of the sacred Scriptures on all the leading articles of faith, it will, however, be necessary to show the evidence which is there given to the two propositions in the title of the chapter:- that the Holy Ghost (from the Saxon word gast, a Spirit,) is a

PERSON; and that he is God.

As to the manner of his being, the orthodox doctrine is, that as Christ is God by an eternal filiation, so the Spirit is God by procession from the Father and the Son. "And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and giver of life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, who, ' with the Father and Son together, is worshipped and glorified." (Nicene Creed.) "The Holy Ghost is of the Father and of the Son, neither made, nor created, nor begotten,

but proceeding." (Athanasian Creed.) "The Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, is of one substance, majesty, and glory, with the Father and the Son, very and eternal God." (Articles of the English Church.) The Latin Church introduced the term spiration, from spiro, to breathe, to denote the manner of this procession; on which Dr. Owen remarks, "as the vital breath of a man has a continual emanation from him, and yet is never separated utterly from his person, or forsaketh him,

so doth the Spirit of the Father and the Son proceed from them by a continual Divine emanation, still abiding one with them." On this refined view little can be said which has obvious Scriptural authority; and yet the very term by which the third person in the trinity is designated wind or breath may, as to the third person, be designed, like the term Son applied to the second, to convey, though imperfectly, some intimation of that manner of being by which both are distinguished from each other, and from the Father;

and it was a remarkable action of our Lord, and one certainly which does not discountenance this idea, that when he imparted the Holy Ghost to his disciples, "he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost,"

John 20:22. (5)

(5) "The Father hath relation to the Son, as the Father of the Son; the Son to the Father, as the Son of the Father; and the Holy Ghost being the spirit, or wreath of the Father and the Son, to both." (Lawsorfs Theo. Pol] But

though breath or wind is the radical signification of pneuma, as also of spiritus, yet, probably from its sacredness, it is but rarely used in that sense in the New Testament.

But whatever we may think as to the doctrine of "spiratum." the procession of the Holy Ghost rests on direct Scriptural authority, and is thus stated by Bishop Pearson:-

"Now this procession of the Spirit, in reference to the Father, is delivered expressly, in relation to the Son, and is contained

virtually in the Scriptures. First, it is expressly said, that the Holy Ghost proceedeth from the Father, as our Savior testifieth,' When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me,' John 15:26. And this is also evident from what hath been already asserted: for being the Father and the Spirit are the same God, and being so the same in the unity of the nature of God, are yet distinct in the

personality, one of them must have the same nature from the other; and because the Father hath been already shown to have it from none, it followeth that the Spirit hath it from him.

"Secondly, though it be not expressly spoken in the Scripture, that the Holy Ghost proceedeth from the Father and Son, yet the substance of the same truth is virtually contained there; because those very expressions, which are spoken of the Holy Spirit in relation to the Father, for

that reason because he proceedeth from the Father, are also spoken of the same Spirit in relation to the Son; and therefore there must be the same reason presupposed in reference to the Son, which is expressed in reference to the Father. Because the Spirit proceedeth from the Father, therefore it is called the Spirit of God and the Spirit of the Father. Ìt is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you,' Matt. 10:20. For by the language of the apostle, the Spirit of God is the Spirit which is of

God, saying, `The things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God. And we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God,' 1 Cor.

2:11, 12. Now the same Spirit is also called the Spirit of the Son; for `because we are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts,' Gal. 4:6: the Spirit of Christ; 'Now if any-man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his,' Rom. 8:9; èven the Spirit of Christ which was in the prophets,' 1 Peter 1:11; the

Spirit of Jesus Christ, as the apostle speaks, Ì know that this shall turn to my salvation, through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,' Phil, 1:19. If then the Holy Ghost be called the Spirit of the Father, because he proceedeth from the Father, it followeth that, being called also the Spirit of the Son, he proceedeth also from the Son.

"Again: because the Holy Ghost proceedeth from the Father, he is therefore sent by the Father, as from him who hath by the original

communication, a right of mission; as ' the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send,' John 14:26. But the same Spirit which is sent by the Father is also sent by the Son, as he saith, ' When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you.' Therefore the Son hath the same right of mission with the Father, and consequently must be acknowledged to have communicated the same essence. The Father is never sent by the Son, because he received not the Godhead from him; but the

Father sendeth the Son, because he communicated the Godhead to him: in the same manner, neither the Father nor the Son is ever sent by the Holy Spirit; because neither of them received the Divine nature from the Spirit: but both the Father and the Son sendeth the Holy Ghost, because the Divine nature, common to both the Father and the Son, was communicated by them both to the Holy Ghost. As therefore the Scriptures declare expressly, that the Spirit proceedeth from the Father; so do they also

virtually teach that he proceedeth from the Son." (Discourses on the Creed.) In opposition to the doctrine of the personality and Deity of the Spirit, stands the Socinian hypothesis, which I state before the evidence from Scripture is adduced, that it may be seen, upon examination of inspired testimony, how far it is supported by that authority. arius regarded the Spirit not only as a creature, but as created by Christ, ktisma ktismatos, the creature of a creature. Some time afterward, his

personality was wholly denied by the Arians, and he was considered as the exerted energy of God. This appears to have been the notion of Socinus, and, with occasional modifications, has been adopted by his followers. They sometimes regard him as an attribute, and at others resolve the passages in which he is spoken of into a periphrasis, or circumlocution for God himself; or, to express both in one, into a figure of speech.

In establishing the proper personality and Deity of the Holy Ghost, the first argument is drawn from the frequent association, in Scripture, of & person, under that appellation, with two other persons, one of whom, "the Father," is by all acknowledged to be Divine; and the ascription to each of them, or to the three in union, of the same acts, titles, and authority, with worship of the same kind, and, for any distinction that is made, in an equal degree. This argument has already been applied to establish the

Divinity of the Son, whose personality is not questioned; and the terms of the proposition may be as satisfactorily established as to the Holy Spirit, and will prove at the same time both his personality and his Divinity.

With respect to the Son, we have seen that, as so great and fundamental a doctrine as his Deity might naturally be expected to be announced in the Old Testament revelation, though its full manifestation should be reserved to the New; so it

was, in fact, not faintly shadowed forth, but displayed with so much clearness as to become an article of faith in the Jewish Church. The manifestation of the existence and Divinity of the Holy Spirit may also be expected in the law and the prophets, and is, in fact, to be traced there with equal certainty. The spirit is represented as an agent in creation, "moving upon the face of the waters;" and it forms no objection to the argument, that creation is ascribed to the Father, and also to the Son, but a great

confirmation of it. That creation should be effected by all the three persons of the Godhead, though acting in different respects, yet so that each should be a Creator, and, therefore, both a person and a Divine person can be explained only by their unity in one essence. On every other hypothesis this Scriptural fact is disallowed, and therefore no other hypothesis can be true. If the Spirit of God be a mere influence, then he is not a Creator, distinct from the Father and the Son, because he is not a person;

but this is refuted both by the passage just quoted and by Psalm 33:6, "By the word of the lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath (Heb. spirit) of his mouth." This is farther confirmed by Job 33:4, "The spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life;" where the second clause is obviously exegetic of the former, and the whole text I proves that, in the patriarchal age, the followers of the true religion ascribed creation to the Spirit, as well as to

the Father; and that one of his appellations was "the breath of the Almighty." Did such passages stand alone, there might indeed be some plausibility in the criticism which solves them by a personification; but, connected as they are with that whole body of evidence, which has been and shall be adduced, as to the concurring doctrine of both Testaments, they are inexpugnable. Again: if the personality of the Son and the Spirit be allowed, and yet it is contended that they were but instruments in creation, through whom

the creative power of another operated, but which creative power was not possessed by them; on this hypothesis, too, neither the Spirit nor the Son can be said to create, any more than Moses created the serpent into which his rod was turned, and the Scriptures are again contradicted. To this association of the three persons in creative acts may be added a like association in acts of preservation, which has been well called a continued creation, and by that term is expressed in

the following passage: Psalm 104:27-30, "These wait all upon thee, that thou mayest give them their meat in due season. Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled; thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to dust: thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created, and thou renewest the face of the earth." It is not surely here meant that the Spirit, by which the generations of animals are perpetuated, is wind; and if he be called an attribute, wisdom, power, or both united, where do we read of such attributes

being "sent," "sent forth from God?" The personality of the Spirit is here as clearly marked as when St. Paul speaks of God "sending forth the Spirit of his Son," and when our Lord promises to send" the Comforter; and as the upholding and preserving of created things is ascribed to the Father and the Son, so here they are ascribed, also, to the Spirit, "sent forth from" God to "create and renew the face of the earth."

The next association of the three persons we find in

the inspiration of the prophets. "God spake unto our fathers by the prophets," says St. Paul, Heb. 1:1. St. Peter declares, that these "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," 2 Pet. 1:21; and also that it was "the Spirit of christ which was in them," 1 Pet. 1:11. We may defy any Socinian to interpret these three passages by making the Spirit an influence or attribute, and thereby reducing the term Holy Ghost into a figure of speech. "God" in the first passage, is,

unquestionably, God the Father, and the "holy men of God," the prophets, would then, according to this view, be moved by the influence of the Father; but the influence, according to the third passage, which was the source of their inspiration, was the Spirit, or the influence of "Christ." Thus the passages contradict each other. Allow the trinity in unity, and you have no difficulty in calling the Spirit, the Spirit of the Father, and the Spirit of the Son, or the Spirit of either; but if the Spirit be an influence, that

influence cannot be the influence of two persons, one God, and the other a creature. Even if they allowed the pre-existence of Christ, with Arians, the passages are inexplicable by ' Socinians; but, denying his pre-existence, they have no subterfuge but to interpret "the Spirit of Christ," the Spirit which prophesied of Christ, (New Version in loc.) which is a purely gratuitous paraphrase; or "the spirit of an anointed one, or prophet;" that is, the prophet's own spirit, which is just as gratuitous, and as

unsupported by any parallel, as the former. If, however, the Holy Spirit be the Spirit of the Father and of the Son, united in one essence, the passages are easily harmonized. In conjunction with the Father and the Son, he is the source of that prophetic inspiration under which the prophets spoke and acted. So the same spirit which raised Christ from the dead is said by St. Peter to have preached by Noah, while the ark was preparing, an allusion to the passage ,
"My Spirit shall not always

strive (contend, debate) with man." This, we may observe, affords an eminent proof, that the writers of the New Testament understood the phrase "the Spirit of God,"

as it occurs in the Old Testament, personally. For, whatever may be the full meaning of that difficult passage in St. Peter, Christ is clearly declared to have preached by the Spirit in the days of Noah; that is, he, by the Spirit, inspired Noah to preach. If, then, the apostles understood that the Holy Ghost was a

person, a point which will presently be established, we have, in the text just quoted from the book of Genesis, a key to the meaning of those texts in the Old Testament, where the phrases "My Spirit," "the Spirit of God," and "the Spirit of the Lord," occur; and inspired authority is thus afforded us to interpret them as of a person; and if of a person, the very effort made by Socinians to deny his personality, itself indicates that that person must, from the lofty titles and works ascribed to him, be

inevitably Divine. Such phrases occur in many passages of the Hebrew Scriptures; but in the following the Spirit is also eminently distinguished from two other persons. "And now the lord God and his spirit hath sent me." Isa. 48:16; or, rendered better, "hath sent me and his spirit," both terms being in the accusative case. "Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read:- for my mouth it hath commanded, and his spirit it hath gathered them," Isa. 34:16. "I am with you, saith the lord of HOSTS:

according to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not.

For thus saith the lord of hosts, - I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come," Haggai 2:4-7. Here, also, the spirit of the Lord is seen collocated with the lord of hosts and the desire of all nations, who is the Messiah. For other instances of the indication of a trinity of Divine persons in the Old Testament, see chap. 9.

Three persons, and three only, are associated also, both in the Old and New Testament, as objects of supreme worship; as the one name in which the religious act of solemn benediction is performed, and to which men are bound by solemn religious covenant.

In the plural form of the name of God, which has already been considered, (chapter 9,) each, received equal adoration. That threefold personality seems to have given rise to the standing form of triple

benediction used by the Jewish high priest, also before mentioned, (chapter 9.) The very important fact, that, in the vision of Isaiah, chapter vi, the lord of hosts, who spake unto the prophet, is in Acts 28:25, said to be the Holy Ghost who spake to the prophet, while St. John declares that the glory which Isaiah saw was the glory of christ, proves, indisputably, (chapter 9,) that each of the three persons bears this august appellation; it gives also the reason for the threefold repetition "holy, holy, holy," and it exhibits

the prophet and the very seraphs in deep and awful adoration before the triune Lord of hosts. Both the prophet and the seraphim were, therefore, worshippers of the Holy Ghost and of the Son, at the very time and by the very acts in which they worshipped the Father, which proves that, as the three persons received equal homage in a case which does not admit of the evasion of pretended superior and inferior worship, they are equal in majesty, glory, and essence.

As in the tabernacle form of benediction, the triune Jehovah is recognized as the source of all grace and peace to his creatures; so in apostolic formula of blessing, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

Amen." Here the personality of the three is kept distinct, and the prayer to the three is, that Christians may have a common participation of the Holy Spirit, that is, doubtless, as he was

promised by our Lord to his disciples, as a Comforter, as the source of light and spiritual life, as the author of regeneration. Thus the Spirit is acknowledged, equally with the Father and the Son, to be the source and the giver of the highest spiritual blessings, while the solemn ministerial benediction is, from its specific character, to be regarded as an act of prayer to each of the three persons, and therefore is, at once, an acknowledgment of the Divinity and personality of each.

The same remark applies to Rev. 1:4, 5, "Grace be unto you and peace from Him which was, and which is, and which is to come; and from the seven spirits which are before his throne," (an emblematical representation, in reference, probably, to the golden branch with its seven lamps,)

"and from Jesus Christ." The style of the book sufficiently accounts for the Holy Spirit being called "the seven spirits;" but no created spirit or company of created spirits are ever

spoken of under that appellation; and the place assigned to the seven spirits between the mention of the Father and the Son, indicates, with certainty, that one of the sacred three, so eminent, and so exclusively eminent in both dispensations, is intended.

The form of baptism next presents itself with demonstrative evidence on the two points before us, the personality and Divinity of the Holy Spirit. It is the form of covenant by which the sacred three

become our one or only God, and we become his people. "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the father, and of the son, and of the Holy Ghost." In what manner is this text to be disposed of, if the personality of the Holy Ghost is denied? Is the form of baptism to be so understood as to imply that it is baptism in the name of one God, one creature, and one attribute 1 The grossness of this absurdity refutes it, and proves that here, at least, there can be no

personification. If all the three, therefore, are persons, are we to make Christian baptism a baptism in the name of one God and two creatures? This would be too near an approach to idolatry, or rather, it would be idolatry itself; for, considering baptism as an act of dedication to God, the acceptance of God as our God, on our part, and the renunciation of all other deities, and all other religions, what could a heathen convert conceive of the two creatures so distinguished from all

other creatures in heaven and in earth, and so associated with God himself as to form together the one name, to which, by that act, he was devoted, and which he was henceforward to profess and honor, but that they were equally Divine, unless special care were taken to instruct him that but one of the three was God, and the two others but creatures?

But of this care, of this cautionary instruction, though so obviously necessary upon this theory, no single instance can be

given in all the writings of the apostles.

Baptism was not a new rite. It was used as a religious act among heathens, and especially before initiation into their mysteries. Proselytes to the law of Moses were, probably, received by baptism; whether in, or into, the name of the God of Israel does not appear; (6) but necessarily on professing their faith in him as the true and only God. John, the forerunner of our Lord, baptized, but it does not appear that he baptized in

the name or into the name of any one. This baptism was to all but our Lord, who needed it not, a baptism "unto repentance," that is, on profession of repentance, to be followed by "fruits meet for repentance," and into the expectation of the speedy approach of Messiah. But Christian baptism was directed to be in the name of three persons, which peculiarly implies, first, the form of words to be used by the administration; second, the authority conveyed to receive such persons as had been made disciples into

the Church, and, consequently, into covenant with God; third, the faith required of the person baptized, faith in the existence of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and in their character according to the revelation made of each, first, by inspired teachers, and in after times by their writings; and, fourth, consecration to the service of the three persons, having one name, which could be no other than that of the one God. What stronger proof of the Divinity of each can be given than in this single

passage? The form exhibits three persons, without any note of superiority or inferiority, except that' of the mere order in which they are placed. It conveys authority in the united name, and the authority is, therefore, equal. It supposes faith, that is, not merely belief, but, as the object of religious profession and adherence, trust in each, or collectively in the one name which unites the three in one; yet that which is Divine only can be properly the object of religious truth. It implies devotion to the service of

each, the yielding of obedience, the consecration of every power of mind and body to each, and therefore each must have an equal right to this surrender and to the authority which it implies.

(6) The baptism of Jewish proselytes is a disputed point. It was strenuously maintained by Dr.

Lightfoot, and opposed by Dr. Benson. Wall has, however, made the practice highly probable, and it is spoken of in the Gospels as a rite with which the Jews were familiar. Certainly it

was a practice among the Jews near the Christian era

It has been objected, that baptism is, in the book of Acts, frequently mentioned as baptism "in the name of the Lord Jesus" simply, and from hence the Socinians would infer that the formula in the Gospel of St. Matthew was not in use. If this were so, it would only conclude against the use of the words of our Lord as the standing form of baptism, but would prove nothing against the significancy of baptism in whatever form

it might be administered. For as this passage in St. Matthew was the original commission under which, alone, the apostles had authority to baptize at all, the import of the rite is marked out in it, and, whatever words they used in baptism, they were found to explain the import of the rite, as laid down by their Master, to all disciples so received. But, from the passages adduced from the Acts, the inference that the form of baptism given in Matthew was not rigorously followed by the apostles does not

follow, "because the earliest Christian writers inform us, that this solemn form of expression was uniformly employed from the beginning of the Christian Church. It is true, indeed, that the Apostle Peter said to those who were converted on the day of pentecost, Acts 2:38, `Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ;' and that, in different places of the book of Acts it is said, that persons were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus; but there is internal evidence from the New

Testament itself, that when the historian says, that persons were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, he means they were baptized according to the form prescribed by Jesus. Thus the question put, Acts 19:3,' Unto what then were ye baptized?' shows that he did not suppose it possible for any person who administered Christian baptism to omit the mention of `the Holy Ghost;' and even after the question, the historian, when he informs us that the disciples were baptized, is not solicitous to repeat

the whole form, but says in his usual manner, Acts 19:5, `when they heard this, they were baptized, in the name of the Lord Jesus.' There is another question put by the Apostle Paul, which shows us in what light he viewed the form of baptism:1 Cor. 1:13, 'Were ye baptized in the name of Paul?' Here the question implies that he considered the form of baptism as so sacred, that the introducing the name of a teacher into it was the same thing as introducing a new master into the kingdom of Christ."

Ecclesiastical antiquity comes in, also, to establish the exact use of this form in baptism, as the practice from the days of the apostles. The most ancient method was for the persons to be baptized to say, "I believe in God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost." This was his profession of faith, and with respect to the administration, Justin Martyr, who was born soon after the death of the Apostle John, says, in his first Apology, "Whosoever can be persuaded and believe that those things

which are taught and asserted by us are true-are brought by us to a place where there is water, and regenerated according to the rite of regeneration, by which we ourselves have been born again. For then they are washed in the water, in the name of God the Father and Lord of all, and of our Savior Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Ghost." This passage, I may observe by the way, shows that, in the primitive Church, men were not baptized in order to their being taught, but taught in order to their being

baptized, and that, consequently, baptism was not a mere expression of willingness to be instructed, but a profession of faith, and a consecration to the trinity, after the course of instruction was completed. Tertullian also says,

"the law of baptism is enjoined and the form prescribed, Go teach the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit." (De Baptismo.) The testimonies to this effect are abundant,

(7) and, together with the form given by our Lord, they prove that every Christian in the first ages did, upon his very entrance into the Church of Christ, pro-fess his faith in the Divinity and personality of the Holy Ghost, as well as of the Father and the Son.

(7) See Wall's History of Infant Baptism and Bingham's Antiquities But other arguments are not wanting to prove both the personality and the Divinity of the Holy Spirit. With respect to the former,

1. The mode of his subsistence in the sacred trinity proves his personality. He proceeds from the Father and the Son, and cannot, therefore, be either. To say that an attribute proceeds and comes forth would be a gross absurdity.

2. From so many Scriptures being wholly unintelligible and even absurd, unless the Holy Ghost is allowed to be a person. For as those who take the phrase as ascribing no more than a figurative personality to an attribute, make that

attribute to be the energy or power of God, they reduce such passages as the following to utter unmeaningness: "God anointed Jesus with the Holy Ghost and with power" that is, with the power of God and with power. "That ye may abound in hope T

through the power of the Holy Ghost," that is, through the power of power. "In demonstration of the Spirit and of power," that is, in demonstration of power and of power. And if it should be pleaded that

the last passage is a Hebraism for "powerful demonstration of the Spirit," it makes the interpretation still more obviously absurd, for it would then be "the powerful demonstration of power." "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost," to the power of God, "and to us." "The Spirit and the bride say, Come," - the power of God and the bride say, Come. Modern Unitarians, from Dr.

Priestley to Mr. Belsham, venture to find fault with the style of the apostles in

some instances; and those penmen of the Holy Spirit have, indeed, a very unfortunate method of expressing themselves for those who would make them the patrons of Socinianism; but they would more justly deserve the censures of these judges of the "words which the Holy Ghost" taught, had they been really such writers as the Socinian scheme would make them, and of which the above are instances.

3. Personification of any kind is, in some passages in

which the Holy Ghost is spoken of, impossible. The reality which this figure of speech is said to present to us is either some of the attributes of God, or else the doctrine of the Gospel. Let this theory, then, be tried upon the following passages:- "He shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall tear, that shall he speak." What attribute of God can here be personified? And if the doctrine of the Gospel be arrayed with personal attributes, where is there an instance of so monstrous a prosopopaeia

as this passage would present? -the doctrine of the Gospel not speaking "of himself" but speaking

"whatsoever he shall hear!" - "The Spirit maketh intercession for us." What attribute is capable of interceding, or how can the doctrine of the Gospel intercede? Personification, too, is the language of poetry, and takes place naturally only in excited and elevated discourse; but if the Holy Spirit be a personification, we find it in the ordinary and cool strain of mere narration

and argumentative discourse in the New Testament, and in the most incidental conversations. "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." How impossible is it here to extort, by any process whatever, even the shadow of a personification of either any attribute of God, or of the doctrine of the Gospel. So again,

"The Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot."

Could it be any attribute of God which said this, or could it be the doctrine of the Gospel?

It is in vain, then, to speak of the personification of wisdom in the book of Proverbs, and of charity in the writings of St. Paul; and if even instances of the personification of Divine attributes and of the doctrine of the Gospel could be found under this very term, the Holy Spirit, yet the above texts and numerous other passages being utterly incapable of being so resolved, would

still teach the doctrine of a personal Holy Ghost. The passage on which such interpreters chiefly rely as an instance of the personification of the doctrine of the Gospel is 2 Cor. 3:6, "Who also hath' made us able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the Spirit; for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life." To this Witsius well replies:-

"Were we to grant that the Spirit, by a metonymy, denotes the doctrine of the Gospel; what is improperly ascribed there to the

Gospel as an exemplary cause, is properly to be attributed to the person of the Holy Spirit, as the principal efficient cause. Thus also that which is elsewhere ascribed to the letter of the law is, by the same analogy, to be attributed to the person of the lawgiver. But it does not seem necessary for us to make such a concession. The apostle does not call the law * the letter;' or the Gospel ' the Spirit;' but teaches that the letter is in the law, and the Spirit in the Gospel, so that they who minister to the law,

minister to the letter; they who minister to the Gospel, to the Spirit. He calls that the letter, which is unable at first, and by itself, to convert a man; or to give a sinner the hope of life, much less to quicken him. By the Spirit, he understands both the person of the Spirit, and his quickening grace; which is clearly disclosed, and rendered efficacious, by means of the Gospel. In a preceding verse, the apostle undoubtedly distinguishes the Spirit from the doctrine, when he calls the Corinthians the

epistle of Christ, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God.' " (Exposition of Creed.) Finally, that the Holy Ghost is a person, and not an attribute, is proved by the use of masculine pronouns and relatives in the Greek of the New Testament, in connection with the neuter noun pneuma, Spirit; and by so many distinct personal acts being ascribed to him, as, to come, to go, to be sent, to teach, to guide, to comfort, to make intercession, to bear witness, to give gifts,

"dividing them to every man as he will," to be vexed, grieved, and quenched. These cannot be applied to the mere fiction of a person, and they, therefore, establish the Spirit's true personality.

Some additional arguments, to those before given to establish the divinity of the Holy Ghost may also be adduced.

The first is taken from his being the subject of blasphemy - "the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men," Matt.

12:31. This blasphemy consisted in ascribing his miraculous works to Satan; and that he is capable of being blasphemed proves him to be as much

& person as the Son; and it proves him to be Divine, because it shows that he may be sinned against, and so sinned against, that the blasphemer shall not be forgiven. A person he must be, of he could not be blasphemed; a Divine person he must be to constitute this blasphemy a sin against him in the proper sense, and of so

malignant a kind as to place it beyond the reach of mercy.

He is called God. "Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie unto the Holy Ghost? Why hast thou conceived this in thine heart? Thou hast not lied unto men; but unto God." Ananias is said to have lied, particularly "unto the Holy Ghost," because the apostles were under his special direction, in establishing the temporary regulation among Christians that they should have all things in common;

the detection of the crime itself was a demonstration of the Divinity of the Spirit, because it showed his omniscience, his knowledge of the most secret acts. In addition to the proof of his Divinity thus afforded by this history, he is also called God, "Thou hast not lied unto men; but unto God." He is also called the lord, "Now the Lord is that Spirit," 2 Cor. 3:17.

He is eternal, "the eternal Spirit," Heb. ix, 14. omnipresence is ascribed to him, "Your body is the

temple of the Holy Ghost;" "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Now, as all true Christians are his temples, and are led by him, he must be present to them at all times and in all places. He is said to be omniscient, "The Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things of God." Here the Spirit is said to search or know "all things" absolutely; and then, to make this more emphatic, that he knows "the deep things of God," things hidden from every creature, the depths of his

essence, and the secrets of his counsels; for, that this is intended, appears from the next verse, where he is said to know "the things of God," as the spirit of a man knows the things of a man. supreme majesty is also attributed to him, so that "to lie to him," to

"blaspheme" him, "to vex" him, to do him "despite," are sins, and render the offender liable to Divine punishment.

He is the source of inspiration. "Holy men of God spake as the were moved by the Holy Ghost."

"He shall lead you into all truth." He is the source and fountain of life. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth." "He that raised up Christ from the dead shall quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." As we have seen him acting in the material creation, so he is the author of the new creation, which is as evidently a work of Divine power as the former: "Born of the Spirit;" "The renewing of the Holy Ghost." He is the author of religious comfort - "The Comforter." The moral

attributes of God are also given to him. holiness, which includes all in one:- the holy Ghost is his eminent designation. goodness and grace are his attributes. "Thy Spirit is good." "The Spirit of grace" truth also, for he is "the Spirit of truth."

How impracticable it is to interpret the phrase, "The Holy Ghost," as a periphrasis for God himself, has been proved in considering some of the above passages, and will be obvious from the slightest consideration of the texts.

A Spirit, which is the Spirit of GOD; which is so often distinguished from the Father: which "sees" and "hears" "the Father;" which searches "the deep things" of God; which is "sent" by the Father; which "proceedeth" from him; and who has special prayer addressed to him at the same time as the Father, cannot, though "one with him,"

be the Father; and that he is not the Son, is acknowledged on both sides.

As a divine person, our regards are, therefore, justly due to him as the object of worship and trust, of prayer and blessing; duties to which we are specially called, both by the general consideration of his Divinity, and by that affectingly benevolent and attractive character under which he is presented to us in the whole Scriptures. In creation we see him moving upon the face of chaos, and reducing it to a beautiful order; in providence, "renewing the face of the earth,"

"garnishing the heavens," and "giving life" to man. In grace we behold him expanding the prophetic scene to the vision of the seers of the Old Testament, and making a perfect revelation of the doctrine of Christ to the apostles of the New. He "reproves the world of sin," and works secret conviction of its evil and danger in the heart. He is "the Spirit of grace and supplication;"

the softened heart, the yielding will, all heavenly desires and tendencies are from him. He hastens to

the troubled spirits of penitent men, who are led by his influence to Christ, and in whose hearts he has wrought faith, with the news of pardon, and "bears witness" of their sonship

"with their spirit." He aids their "infirmities;" makes "intercession for them;" inspires thoughts of consolation and feelings of peace; plants and perfects in them whatsoever things are pure, and lovely, and honest, and of good report; delights in his own work in the renewed heart; dwells in the soul as in a temple;

and, after having rendered the spirit to God, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, sanctified and meet for heaven, finishes his benevolent and glorious work by raising the bodies of saints in immortal life at the last day. So powerfully does "the Spirit of glory and of God" claim our love, our praise, and our obedience! In the forms of the Churches of Christ, in all ages, he has, therefore, been associated with the Father and the Son, in equal glory and blessing; and where such forms are not in use, this distinct

recognition of the Spirit, so much in danger of being neglected, ought, by ministers, to be most carefully and constantly made, in every gratulatory act of devotion, that so equally to each person of the eternal trinity glory may be given "in the Church throughout all ages. Amen."

The essential and fundamental character of the doctrine of the holy and undivided trinity has been already stated, and the more fully the evidences of the Divinity of the Son and

the Spirit are educed from the sacred writings, the more deeply we shall be impressed with this view, and the more binding will be our obligation to "contend earnestly for" this part of "the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Nor can the plea here be ever soundly urged, that this is a merely speculative doctrine; for, as it has been well observed by a learned writer, "The truth is, the doctrine of the trinity is so far from being merely a matter of speculation, that it is the very essence of the

Christian religion, the foundation of the whole revelation, and connected with every part of it. All that is peculiar in this religion has relation to the redemption of Christ, and the sanctification of the Spirit. And whosoever is endeavoring to invalidate these articles is overthrowing or undermining the authority of this dispensation, and reducing it to a good moral system only, or treatise of ethics.

"If the Word, or Logos, who became incarnate, was a

created being only, then the mystery of his incarnation, so much insisted on in Scripture, and the love expressed to mankind thereby, so much magnified, dwindle into an interested service; and a short life of sufferings, concluded, indeed, with a painful death, is rewarded with Divine honors, and a creature advanced thereby to the glory of the Creator; for the command is plain and express, that all the angels of God'

should' worship him.' And have not many saints and

martyrs undergone the same sufferings without the like glorious recompense? And is not the advantage to Christ himself, by his incarnation and passion, greater on this supposition, than to men, for whose sake the sacred writers represent this scheme of mercy undertaken?

"Again: if the motions of the Holy Spirit, so frequently spoken of, are only figurative expressions, and do not necessarily imply any real person who is the author of them, or if

this person be only a created being, then we are deprived of all hopes of Divine assistance in our spiritual warfare; and have nothing but our own natural abilities wherewith to contend against the world, the flesh, and the devil. And is it not amazing that this article could ever be represented as a mere abstracted speculation, when our deliverance both from the penalty and power of sin does so plainly depend upon it? In the sacred writings a true faith is made as necessary as a right practice, and this in

particular in order to that end. For Arianism, Socinianism, and all those several heresies, of what kind or title soever, which destroy the Divinity of the Son and Holy Ghost, are, indeed, no other than different schemes of infidelity; since the authority, end, and influence of the Gospel are as effectually made void by disowning the characters in which our Redeemer and Sanctifier are there represented, as even by contesting the evidences of its Divine original. These notions plainly rob those

two Divine persons of their operations and attributes, and of the honor due to them; lessen the mercy and mystery of the scheme of our salvation; degrade our notion of ourselves and our fellow creatures; alter the nature of several duties, and weaken those great motives to the observance of all that true Christianity proposes to us." (Dodwell.)

"The fire which warms us, knows nothing of its serviceableness to this purpose, nor of the wise laws according to which its particles are moved to

produce this effect. And that it is placed in such a part of the house, where it may be greatly beneficial, and no way hurtful, is ascribed without hesitation to the contrivance and labor of a person who knew its proper place and uses.

And if we came daily into a house wherein we saw this was regularly done, though we never saw an inhabitant therein, we could not doubt that the house was occupied by a rational inhabitant.

That huge globe of fire in the heavens, which we call

the sun, and on the light and influences of which the fertility of our world, and the life and pleasure of all animals depend, knows nothing of its serviceableness to these purposes, nor of the wise laws according to which its beams are dispensed; nor what place or motions were requisite for these beneficial purposes. Yet its beams are darted 'constantly in infinite numbers, every one according to those well-chosen laws, and its proper place and motion are maintained. Must not then

its place be appointed, its motion regulated, and beams darted, by almighty wisdom and goodness; which prevent the sun's ever wandering in the boundless spaces of the heavens, so as to leave us in disconsolate cold and darkness; or coming so near, or emitting his rays in such a manner as to burn us up? Must not the great Being who enlightens and warms us by the sun, his instrument, who raises and sends down the vapors, brings forth and ripens the grain and fruits, and who is thus ever acting around us

for our benefit, be always present in the sun, throughout the air, and all over the earth, which he thus moves and actuates?

"This earth is in itself a dead motionless mass, and void of all counsel; yet proper parts of it are continually raised through the small pipes which compose the bodies of plants and trees, and are made to contribute to their growth, to open and shine in blossoms and leaves, and to swell and harden into fruit. Could blind thoughtless particles thus

continually keep on their way, through numberless windings, without once blundering, if they were not guided by an unerring hand?

Can the most perfect human skill from earth and water form one grain, much more a variety of beautiful and relishing fruits? Must not the directing mind, who does all this constantly, be most wise, mighty, and benevolent? Must not the Being who thus continually exerts his skill and energy around us, for our benefit,

be confessed to be always present, and concerned for our welfare?

"Can these effects be ascribed to anything below an all-wise and almighty Cause? And must not this cause be present, wherever he acts? Were God to speak to us every month from heaven, and with a voice loud as thunder declare, that he observes, provides for, and governs us, this would not be a proof in the judgment of sound reason by many degrees so valid. Since much less wisdom and power are required to

form such sounds in the air, than to produce these effects; and to give not merely verbal declarations, but substantial evidences of his presence and care over us." (Amory's Sermons.)

"In every part and place of the universe, with which we 'are acquainted, we perceive the exertion of a power, which we believe immediately or immediately, to proceed from the Deity. For instance: In what part or point of space, that has ever been explored, do we

not discover attraction? In what regions do we not find light? In what accessible portion of our globe do we not meet with gravity, magnetism, electricity; together with the properties also and powers of organized substances, of vegetable or of animated nature? Nay, farther, we may ask, What kingdom is there of nature, what corner of space, in which there is anything that can be examined by us, where we do not fall upon contrivance and design? The only reflection perhaps which arises in our

minds from this view of the world around us is, that the laws of nature everywhere prevail; that they are uniform and universal. But what do we mean by the laws of nature, or by any law? Effects are produced by power, not by laws. A law cannot execute itself. A law refers us to an agent." (Paley.)

The usual argument a priori, on this attribute of the Divine nature, has been stated as follows: but amidst so much demonstration of a much

higher kind, it cannot be of much value.

"The First Cause, the supreme all-perfect mind, as he could not derive his being from any other cause, must be independent of all other, and therefore unlimited. He exists by an absolute necessity of nature; and as all the parts of infinite space are exactly uniform and alike, for the same reason that he exists in any one part, he must exist in all. No reason can be assigned for excluding him from one part, which would

not exclude him from all. But that he is present in some parts of space, the evident effects of his wisdom, power, and benevolence continually produced, demonstrate, beyond all rational doubt. He must therefore be alike present everywhere; and fill infinite space with his infinite being." (Amory.) Among metaphysicians, it has been matter of dispute, whether God is present everywhere by an infinite extension of his essence. This is the opinion of Newton, Dr. S. Clarke, and their followers; others have

objected to this notion, that it might then be said, God is neither in heaven or in earth, but only a part of God in each. The former opinion, however, appears most in harmony with the Scriptures; though the term extension, through the inadequacy of language, conveys too material an idea. The objection just stated is wholly grounded on notions taken from material objects, and is therefore of little weight, because it is not applicable to an immaterial substance. It is best to

confess with one who had thought deeply on the subject, "there is an incomprehensibleness in the manner of everything about which no controversy can or ought to be concerned." (8) That we cannot comprehend how God is fully, and completely, and undividedly present everywhere, need not surprise us, when we reflect that the manner in which our own minds are present with our bodies is as incomprehensible, as the manner in which the supreme mind is present

with everything in the universe.

(8) Jackson's Existence and Unity, &c. - Vide also Watts's Philosophical Es says, and Law's Inquiry into the Ideas of Space, &c.

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38 FALL OF MAN - DOCTRINE OF ORIGINAL SIN

The Scriptural character of God having been adduced from the inspired writings, we now proceed, in pursuance of our plan, to

consider their testimony as to man, both in the estate in which he was first created, and in that lapsed condition into which the first act of disobedience plunged the first pair and their whole posterity.

Beside that natural government of God, which is exercised over material things, over mere animals, and over rational beings, considered merely as parts of the great visible creation, which must be conserved and regulated so as to preserve its order and accomplish its natural

purposes; there is evidence of the existence of an administration of another kind. This we call moral government, because it has respect to the actions of rational creatures, considered as good and evil, which qualities are necessarily determined, at least to us, by a law, and that law the will of God. Whether things are good or evil by a sort of eternal fitness or unfitness in themselves, and not made so by the will of God, is a question which has been agitated from the days of the schoolmen. Like many

other similar questions, however, this is a profitless one; for as we cannot comprehend the eternal reason and fitness of things on the whole, we could have no certain means of determining the moral qualities of things, without a declaration of the will of God, who alone knows them both absolutely and relatively, possibly and really, to perfection. As for the distinctions that some things are good or evil antecedently to the will of God; some consequently upon it, and some both one and the other; it may be

observed that, if by the will of God we are to understand one of his attributes, nothing can be antecedent to his will; and if we understand it to mean the declared will of God, in the form of command or law, then nothing can be rewardable or punishable antecedent to the will of God, which only in that form becomes the rule of the conduct of his creatures; and is, in all the instances with which we are acquainted, revealed, under the sanction of rewards or punishments.

"But is the will of God the cause of his law? Is his will the original of right and wrong? Is a thing therefore right because God wills it? Or does he will it because it is right? I fear this celebrated question is more curious than useful; and perhaps, in the manner in which it is usually treated of, it does not well consist with the regard that is due from a creature to the Creator and Governor of all things. Nevertheless, with awe and reverence we may speak a little.

"It seems then that the whole difficulty arises from considering God's will as distinct from God.

Otherwise it vanishes away: for none can doubt but God is the cause of the law of God. But the will of God is God himself. It is God considered as willing thus and thus; consequently to say that the will of God, or that God himself is the cause of law, is one and the same thing.

"Again: if the law, the immutable rule of right and wrong, depends on the nature and fitness of

things, and on their essential relations to each other: (I do not say their eternal relations, because the eternal relations of things existing in time is little less than a contradiction:) if I say this depends on the nature and relations of things, then it must depend on God, or the will of God; because those things themselves, with all their relations, are the work of his hands. By his will, for his pleasure alone, they are and were created. And yet it may be granted, which is, probably, all that a

considerate person would contend for, that in every particular case God wills thus or thus, (suppose that men should honor their parents,) because it is right, agreeable to the fitness of things, to the relation in which they stand." (Wesley.)

All the moral and accountable creatures with which the Scriptures make us acquainted are angels, devils, and men. The first are inhabitants of heaven, and dwell in the immediate presence of God, though often employed on services

to the children of men in this world. The second are represented as being in darkness and punishment as their general and collective condition, but still having access to this world by permission of God, for purposes of temptation and mischief, and as waiting for a final judgment and a heavier doom. Whether any other rational beings exist, not included in any of the above classes, dwelling in the planets and other celestial bodies, and regions of space, visible or invisible to us, and

collectively forming an immensely extended and immeasurable creation, cannot be certainly determined; and all that can be said is, that the opinion is favored by certain natural analogies between the planet we inhabit and other planetary bodies, and between our sun and planetary system and the fixed stars, which are deemed to be solar centers of other planetary systems. But were this established, there is nothing in the fact, as some have supposed, to interfere with any view which the

Scriptures give us of the moral government of God, as to this world. (See vol. i, p. 206.) Were our race alone in the universe, we should not be greater than we are; if, on the contrary, we are associated with countless myriads of fellow rationales in different and distinct residences, we are not thereby minified. If they are under moral government, so are we; if they are not, which no one can prove, the evidences that we are accountable creatures remain the same. If they have never fallen, the fact of our redemption

cannot be affected by that; and if they need a Savior, we may well leave the method of providing for their case or the reasons of their preterition to the wisdom of God; it is a fact which we have not before us, and on which we cannot reason. No sinister use at all can be made of the mere probability of the plurality of rational worlds, except to persuade us that we are so little and insignificant as to make it a vain presumption to suppose that we are the objects of Divine love. But nothing can be even more

unphilosophical than the suggestion, since it supposes that, in proportion as the common Father multiplies his offspring, he must love each individual less, or be more inattentive to his interests; and because it estimates the importance of man by the existence of beings to which he has no relation, rather than by his relation to God, and his own capacity of improvement, pleasure, pain, and immortality. According to this absurd dream of infidelity, every individual in the British

Empire would annually lose his weight and worth in the sight of his Maker as a moral and intellectual being, because there is a great annual increase of its population.

The law under which all moral agents are placed, there is reason to believe, is substantially, and in its great principles, the same, and is included in this epitome, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as

thyself." For though this is spoken to men, yet, as it is founded, in both its parts, upon the natural relation of every intelligent creature to God and to all other intelligent creatures, it may be presumed to be universal. Every creature owes obedience to God its Maker, and a benevolent Creator could only seek, in the first instance, the obedience of love. Every creature must, from a revealed character of the Creator, be concluded to have been made not only to show forth his glory, but itself to enjoy happiness.

Now the love of God is that affection which unites a created intelligent nature to God, the source of true happiness, and prevents, in all cases, obedience from being felt as a burden, or regarded under the cold convictions of mere duty. If, therefore, a cheerful obedience from the creature be required as that which would constantly promote by action the felicity of the agent, this law of love is to be considered as the law of all moral beings, whether of angels or of men. Its comprehensive, ness is

another presumption of its universality; for, Unquestionably, it is a maxim of universal import, that "love is the fulfilling of the law," since he who loves must choose to be obedient to every command issued by the sovereign, or the Father beloved; and when this love is supreme and uniform, the obedience must be absolute and unceasing. The second command is also "like unto it" in these respects-it founds itself on the natural relations which exist among the creatures of

God, and it comprehends every possible relative duty. All intelligent creatures were intended to live in society. We read of no solitary rational being, being placed in any part of the creation. Angels are many, and, from all the representations of Scripture, may be considered as forming one or more collective bodies.

When man was created it was decided that it was not good for him to be alone, and when "a help meet for him" was provided, they were commanded to be

fruitful and multiply, that the number might be increased and the earth "replenished." The very precepts which oblige us to love one another are presumptive that it was the will of God, not merely that his rational creatures should live in society and do no injury to each other, but that they should be "kindly affectionate one toward another;" a principle from which all acts of relative duty would spontaneously flow, and which would guard against all hostility, envy, and injury. Thus, by these two

great first principles of the Divine law, the rational creatures of God would be' united to him as their common Lord and Father, and to each other as fellow subjects and brethren. This view is farther supported by the intimations which the Scriptures afford us of the moral state of the only other intelligent class of beings beside man with which we are acquainted. Angels are constantly exhibited as loving God, jealous of his glory, and cheerfully active in the execution of his will; as benevolent toward each

other, and as tenderly affected toward men. Devils, on the contrary, who are "the angels that sinned," are represented as filled with hatred and malice both toward God and every holy creature.

Indeed, if rational beings are under a law at all, it cannot be conceived that less than this could be required by the good and holy being, their Creator. They are bound to render all love, honor, and obedience to him by a natural and absolute obligation; and, as it has

been demonstrated in the experience of man, anything less would be not only contrary to the Creator's glory, but fatal to the creature's happiness.

From these views it follows, that all particular precepts, whether they relate to God or to other rational creatures, arise out of one or other of those two "great" and comprehending "commandments;" and that every particular law supposes the general one. For as in the Decalogue and in the writings of the prophets are many

particular precepts, though in neither are these two great commandments expressly recorded, and yet our Savior has told us that "on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets;" and the Apostle Paul, that the precepts,

"Thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not covet, and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself;" we are

warranted to conclude that all moral, particular precepts presuppose those two general ones, wherever they are found, and to whomsoever they are given.

We may apply this consideration to our first parents in their primitive state. When the Law of Moses was given, engraved on tables of stone by the finger of God, law was not first introduced into the world. Men were accounted righteous or wicked between the giving of the law and the flood, and

before the flood, and were dealt with accordingly. Noah was "a righteous man," and the "violence and wickedness" of the antediluvian earth were the causes of its destruction by water. "Enoch walked with God;" Abel was "righteous," and Cain "wicked." Now as the moral quality of actions is determined by law, and the moral law is a revelation of the will of God; and as every punitive act on his part, and every bestowment of rewards and favors expressly on account of righteousness, suppose a

regal administration; men were under a law up to the time of the fall, which law, in all its particular precepts, did, according to the reasoning of our Lord and St. Paul, given above, presuppose the two great commandments. That our first parents were under a law, is evident from the history of the transactions in the garden; but, though but one particular command, in the form of a prohibition, was given, we are not to conclude that this was the compass of their requirements, and the sole measure of their

obedience. It was a particular command, which, like those in the Decalogue, and in the writings of the prophets, presupposed a general law, of which this was but one manifestation. Thus are we conducted to a more ancient date of the Divine law than the solemnities of Sinai, or even the creation of man, a law coeval in its declaration with the date of rational created existence, and in its principles with God himself.

- "The law of God, speaking of the manner of men, is a

copy of the eternal mind, a transcript of the Divine nature; yea, it is the fairest offspring of the everlasting Father, the brightest efflux of his essential wisdom, the visible beauty of the Most High; the original idea of truth and good which were lodged in the uncreated mind from eternity" (Wesley.) It is "holy, just, and good."

Under this condition of rational existence must Adam, therefore, and every other moral agent have come into being, a condition, of course, to

which he could not be a party, to which he had no right to be a party, had it been possible, but which was laid upon him; he was made under law, as all his descendants are born under law. (8)

(8) The covenant of works, a term much in use among divines, is one which is not in so much use as formerly; but, rightly understood, it has a good sense. The word usually translated covenant in the New Testament, more properly signifies a dispensation or appointment, which is,

indeed, suited to the majesty of law, and even the authoritative establishment of a sole method of pardon. But in both there are parties, not to their original institution, but to their beneficent accomplishment, and in this view each may be termed a covenant.

But that we may more exactly understand man's primitive state, considered morally, and the nature, extent, and consequences of his fall, it is necessary to consider briefly the history of his creation.

The manner in which this is narrated indicates something peculiar and eminent in the being to be formed. In the heavenly bodies around the earth, and among all the various productions of its surface, vegetable and animal, however perfect in their kinds, and complete, beautiful, and excellent in their respective natures, not one being was found to whom the rest could minister instruction, whom they could call forth into meditation, inspire with moral delight, or lead up to the Creator himself. There

was, properly speaking, no intellectual being; none to whom the whole, or even any great number of the parts, of the frame and furniture of material nature could minister knowledge; no one who could employ upon them the generalizing faculty, and make them the basis of inductive knowledge. If, then, it was not wholly for himself that the world was created by God; and angels, if they, as it is indicated in Scripture, had a prior existence, were not so immediately connected with this system, that it can be supposed to

have been made immediately for them; a rational inhabitant was obviously still wanting to complete the work, and to constitute a perfect whole. The formation of such a being was marked, therefore, by a manner of proceeding which serves to impress us with a sense of the greatness of the work. Not that it could be a matter of more difficulty to Omnipotence to create man than anything beside; but principally, it is probable, because he was to be the lord of the whole, and to be, therefore,

himself accountable to the original proprietor, and to exhibit the existence of another species of government, a moral administration; and to be the only creature constituted an image of the intellectual and moral perfections, and of the immortality of the common Maker. Everything, therefore, as to man's creation is given in a solemn and deliberative form, together with an intimation of a trinity of persons in the Godhead, all Divine, because all equally possessed of creative

power, and to each of whom man was to stand in relations so sacred and intimate. "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion," &c. In what, then, did this "image" and "likeness" consist?

That human nature has two essential, constituent parts is manifest from the history of Moses:-

the body, formed out of pre-existent matter, the earth; and a living soul, breathed into the body, by an inspiration from God.

"And the Lord God formed man out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils (or face) the breath of life, (lives,) and the man became a living soul."

Whatever was thus imparted to the body of man, already "formed" and perfectly fashioned; in all its parts, was the only cause of life; and the whole tenor of Scripture shows that that was the rational spirit itself, which, by a law of its Creator, was incapable of death, even

after the body had fallen under that penalty.

The "image" or likeness of God in which man was made, has, by some, been assigned to the body; by others, to the soul; others, again, have found it in the circumstance of his having

"dominion" over the other creatures. As to the body, it is not necessary to take up any large space to prove, that in no sense can that bear the image of God, that is, be "like" God. Descant ever so much or ever so poetically upon man's upright and noble form, an

upright form has no more likeness to God than a prone or reptile one; God is incorporeal, and has no bodily shape to be the antitype of anything material.

This also is fatal to the notion that the image of God in man consisted in the "dominion" which was granted to him over this lower world. Limited dominion may, it is true, be an image of large and absolute dominion, but man is not said to have been made in the image of God's dominion, which is

an accident merely, for, before any creatures existed, God himself could have no dominion; but in the image and likeness of God himself, - of something which constitutes his nature. Still farther, man, according to the history, was evidently made in the image of God, in order to his having dominion, as the Hebrew particle imports, He who was to have dominion, must, necessarily, be made before he could be invested with it, and, therefore, dominion was consequent to his existing in the

"image" and "likeness" of God; and could not be that image itself,

The attempts which have been made to fix upon someone essential quality in which to place that

"image" of God in which man was created, is not only uncalled for by any Scriptural reason, but is even contradicted by various parts of Scripture, from which, alone, we can derive our information on this subject. It is in vain to say that this "image" must be something essential to human nature, something

only which cannot be lost. We shall, it is true, find that the revelation places it in what is essential to human nature; but that it should comprehend nothing else, or one quality only, has no proof or reason; and we are, in fact, taught that it comprises also what is not essential to human nature, and what may be lost and be regained. As to both, the evidence of Scripture is explicit. When God is called "the Father of spirits," a likeness is certainly intimated between man and God in

the spirituality of their nature. This is also implied in the striking argument of St. Paul with the Athenians. "Forasmuch, then, as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art, and man's device," plainly referring to the idolatrous statues by which God was represented among heathens. If likeness to God in man consisted in bodily shape, this would not have been an argument against human representations of

the Deity, but it imports, as Howe well expresses it, that" we are to understand that our resemblance to him, as we are his offspring, lies in some higher, more noble, and more excellent thing, of which there can be no figure, as who can tell how to give the figure or image of a thought, or of the mind or thinking power?" In spirituality, and. consequently, immateriality, this image of God in man, then, in the first existence, consists.

Nor is it any valid objection to say that "immateriality is not peculiar to the soul of man, for we have reason to believe that the inferior animals of the earth are actuated by an immaterial principle." (Gleig's Stackhouse.) This is as certain as analogy can make it: but if we allow a spiritual principle to animals, its kind is obviously inferior; for the spirit which is incapable of continuous induction and moral knowledge must be of an inferior order to the spirit which possesses these capabilities; and this

is the kind of spirituality which is peculiar to man.

The sentiment expressed in Wisdom ii, 23, is evidence that, in the opinion of the ancient Jews, the image of God in man comprised immortality also. "For God created man to be immortal, and made him to be an image of his own eternity;" and though other creatures, and even the body of man were made capable of immortality, and at least the material human frame, whatever we may think of the case of animals, would have

escaped death, had not sin entered the world, yet, without running into the absurdity of the "natural immorality" of the human soul, that essence must have been constituted immortal in a high and peculiar sense, which has ever retained its prerogative of eternal duration amidst the universal death, not only of animals, but of the bodies of all human beings. To me there appears a manifest allusion to man's immortality, as being included in the image of God, in the reason which is

given in Genesis for the law which inflicts death on murderers. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man." The essence of the crime of homicide cannot be in the putting to death the mere animal part of man; and must, therefore, lie in the peculiar value of life to an immortal being, accountable in another state for the actions done in this, and whose life ought to be specially guarded, for this very reason, that death

introduces him into changeless and eternal relations, which were not to lie at the sport or mercy of human passions.

To these we are to add the intellectual powers, and we have what divines have called, in perfect accordance with the Scriptures, the natural image of God in his creature, which is essential and ineffaceable. He was made capable of knowledge, and he was endowed with liberty of will.

This natural image of God in which man was created, was the foundation of that moral image by which also he was distinguished. Unless he had been a spiritual, knowing, and willing being, he would have been wholly incapable of moral qualities. That he had such qualities eminently, and that in them consisted the image of God, as well as in the natural attributes just stated, we have also the express testimony of Scripture. "Lo this only have I found, that God made man upright, but

they have sought out many inventions." The objections taken to this proof are thus satisfactorily answered by President Edwards:-

It is an observation of no weight which Dr. Taylor makes on this text, that the word man is commonly used to signify mankind in general, or mankind collectively taken. It is true, it often signifies the species of mankind; but then it is used to signify the species, with regard to its duration and succession from its beginning, as well as with regard to its extent. The

English word mankind is used to signify the species: but what then? Would it be an improper way of speaking, to say, that when God first made mankind, he placed them in a pleasant paradise, (meaning in their first parents,) but now they live in the midst of briers and thorns 1 And it is certain, that to speak thus of God making mankind, - his giving the species an existence in their first parents, at the creation, - is agreeable to the Scripture use of such an expression. As in Deut. 4:32, ' Since the

day that God created man upon the earth,' Job 20:4, 'Knowest thou not this of old, since man was placed upon the earth,' Isaiah 45:12, 'I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the havens,' Jer. 27:5, 'I have made the earth, the man and the least that are upon the ground, by my great power.' All these texts speak of God making man, signifying the species of mankind; and yet they all plainly have respect to God making man at first, when he 'made the earth,'' and

stretched out the heavens.' In all these places the same word, Adam, is used as in Ecclesiastes; and in the last of these, used with (he emphaticum) the emphatic sign, as here; though Dr.T. omits it when he tells us he gives us a catalogue of all the places in Scripture where the word is used. And it argues nothing to the doctor's purpose, that the pronoun they is used, - ' they have sought out many inventions.' This is properly applied to the species, which God made at first upright; the species begun with more than one,

and continued in a multitude. As Christ speaks of the two sexes, in the relation of man and wife, continued in successive generations: Matt, 19:4, ' He, that made them at the beginning, made them male and female,' having reference to Adam and Eve.

"No less impertinent, and also very unfair, is his criticism on the word (yasher) translated upright. Because the word sometimes signifies right, he would from thence infer, that it does not properly signify moral rectitude,

even when used to express the character of moral agents. He might as well insist, that the English word upright, sometimes, and in its most original meaning, signifies right-up, or in an erect posture, therefore it does not properly signify any moral character, when applied to moral agents. And indeed less unreasonably; for it is known that in the Hebrew language, in a peculiar manner, most words used to signify moral and spiritual things, are taken from external and natural objects. The word (yasher)

Jashur is used, as applied to moral agents, or to the words and actions of such, (if I have not misreckoned,) about a hundred and ten times in Scripture; and in about a hundred of them, without all dispute, to signify virtue, or moral rectitude, (though Dr. T. is pleased to say, the word does not generally signify a moral character,) and for the most part it signifies true virtue, or virtue in such a sense as distinguishes it from all false appearances of virtue, or what is only virtue in some respects but not truly

so in the sight of God. It is used at least eighty times in this sense: and scarce any word can be found in the Hebrew language more significant of this. It is thus used constantly in Solomon's writings, (where it is often found,) when used to express a character or property of moral agents. And it is beyond all controversy that he uses it in this place, (the seventh of Eccles.) to signify moral rectitude, or a character of real virtue and integrity. For the wise man is speaking of persons with respect to their moral

character, inquiring into the corruption and depravity of mankind, (as is confessed by Dr. T.) and he here declares, he had not found one among a thousand of the right stamp, truly and thoroughly virtuous and upright; which appeared a strange thing! But in this text he clears God, and lays the blame on man: man was not made thus at first. He was made of the right stamp, altogether good in his kind, (as all other things were,) truly and thoroughly virtuous, as he ought to be; ' but they have

sought out many inventions,' which last expression signifies things sinful, or morally evil; (as is confessed p. 185.) And this expression, used to signify those moral evils he found in man, which he sets in opposition to the uprightness man was made in, shows, that by uprightness he means the most true and sincere goodness. The word rendered inventions, most naturally and aptly signifies the subtle devices, and crooked deceitful ways of hypocrites, wherein they are of a character contrary

to men of simplicity and godly sincerity; who, though wise in that which is good, are simple concerning evil. Thus the same wise man, in Prov. 12:6, sets a truly good man in opposition to a man of wicked devices, whom God will condemn. Solomon had occasion to observe many who put on an artful disguise and fair show of goodness; but on searching thoroughly, he found very few truly upright. As he says, Prov. 20:6,

'Most men will proclaim every one his own

goodness: but a faithful man, who can find?' so that it is exceeding plain, that by uprightness, in this place, Eccles.7, Solomon means true moral goodness." (Original Sin.)

There is also an express allusion to the moral image of God, in which man was at first created, in Col. 3:10, "And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him;" and, in Eph. 4:24, "Put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true

holiness." In these passages the apostle represents the change produced in true Christians by the Gospel, as a "renewal" of the image of God in man; as a new or second creation in that image; and he explicitly declares, that that image consists in "knowledge," in "righteousness," and in "true holiness." The import of these terms shall be just now considered; but it is here sufficient that they contain the doctrine of a creation of man in the

image of the moral perfections of his Maker.

This also may be finally argued from the satisfaction with which the historian of the creation represents the Creator as viewing the works of his hands as "very good." This is pronounced with reference to each individually, as well as to the whole. "And God saw everything that he had made, and behold it was very good." But, as to man, this goodness must necessarily imply moral as well as physical qualities.

With, out them he would have been imperfect as man; and had they existed in him, in their first exercises, perverted and sinful, he must have been an exception, and could not have been pronounced "very good." The goodness of man, as a rational being, must lie in a devotedness and consecration to God; consequently, man was at first devoted to God, other, wise he was not good, A rational creature, as such, is capable of knowing, loving, serving, and living in communion with the Most Holy One. Adam, at

first, did, or did not use this capacity; if he did not, he was not very good, nor good at all.

As to the degree of moral perfection in the first man, much scope has been given, in describing it, to a warm imagination, and to much rhetorical embellishment; and Adam's perfection has sometimes been placed at an elevation which renders it exceedingly difficult to conceive how he should fall into sin at all; and especially how he should fall so soon as seems to be

represented in the narrative of Moses. On the other hand, those who either deny or hold very slightly the doctrine of our hereditary depravity, delight to represent Adam as little, if at all, superior in moral perfection and capability to his descendants. But, if we attend to the passages of Holy Writ above quoted, we shall be able, on this subject, to ascertain, if not the exact degree of his moral endowments, yet that there is a certain standard below which he could not be placed, in the

perfection of his moral endowments. Generally, he was made in the image of God which we have already proved is to be understood morally as well as naturally. Now, however the image of anything may be reduced in extent, it must still be an accurate representation as far as it goes.

Everything good in the creation must always be a miniature representation of the excellence of the Creator; but, in this case, the "goodness," that is, the perfection of every

creature, according to the part it was designed to act in the general assemblage of beings collected into our system, wholly forbids us to suppose that the image of God's moral perfections in man was a blurred and dim representation. To whatever extent it went, it necessarily excluded all that from man which did not resemble God; it was a likeness to God in "righteousness and true holiness," whatever the degree of each might be, which excluded all admixture of unrighteousness and

unholiness. The first part of our conclusion, therefore is, that man, in his original state, was sinless, both in act and in principle. "God made man upright." That this signifies moral rectitude has been already established; but the import of the word is very extensive. 'It expresses, by an easy figure, the exactness of truth, justice, and obedience; and it comprehends the state and habit both of the heart and the life. Such, then, was the state of primitive man; there was no obliquity of his moral principles, his

mind and affections; none in his conduct. He was perfectly sincere and exactly just, rendering from the heart all that was due to God and to the creature. Tried by the exactest plummet, he was upright; by the most perfect rule, he was straight.

The "knowledge" in which the Apostle Paul, in the passage quoted above from Colos.3:10, places "the image of God" after which man was created, does not merely imply the faculty of the understanding, which is a part of the natural

image of God; but that which might be lost, because it is that in which the new man is "renewed." It is, therefore, to be understood of the faculty of knowledge in the right exercise of its original power; and of that willing reception, and firm retaining, and hearty approval of religious truth, in which knowledge, when spoken of morally, is always understood in the Scriptures. We may not be disposed to allow, with some, that he understood the deep philosophy of nature, and could

comprehend and explain the sublime mysteries of religion. The circumstance of his giving names to the animals is certainly no sufficient proof of his having attained to a philosophical acquaintance with their qualities and distinguishing habits, though we should allow the names to be still retained in the Hebrew, and to be as expressive of their peculiarities as some expositors have stated. No sufficient time appears to have been afforded him for the study of their properties, as this event

took place previous to the formation of Eve; and as for the notion of his acquiring knowledge by intuition, it is contradicted by the revealed fact, that angels themselves acquire their knowledge by observation and study, though, no doubt, with greater rapidity and certainty than we. The whole of the transaction was supernatural; the beasts were "brought" to Adam, and it is probable that he named them under a divine impulse. He has been supposed to be the inventor of language, but

the history shows that he was never without language. He was from the first able to converse with God; and we may, therefore, infer that language was in him a supernatural and miraculous endowment. That his understanding was, as to its capacity, deep and large beyond any of his posterity, must follow from the perfection in which he was created, and his acquisitions of knowledge would, therefore, be rapid and easy. It was, however, in moral and religious truth, as being of the first

concern to him, that we are to suppose the excellency of his knowledge to have consisted. "His reason would be clear, his judgment uncorrupted, and his conscience upright and sensible." (Watts,) The best knowledge would, in him, be placed first, and that of every other kind be made subservient to it, according to its relation to that. The apostle adds to knowledge,

"righteousness and true holiness," terms which express not merely freedom from sin, but positive and active virtues.

"A rational creature thus made, must not only be innocent and free, but must be formed holy. His will must have an inward bias to virtue: he must have an inclination to please that God who made him a supreme love to his Creator, a zeal to serve him, and a tender fear of offending him.

"For either the new created man loved God supremely or not. If he did not he was not innocent, since the law of nature requires a supreme love to God. If he did he stood ready for

every act of obedience: and this is true holiness of heart. And, indeed, without this, how could a God of holiness love the work of his own hands?

"There must be also in this creature a regular subjection of the inferior powers to the superior sense, and appetite and passion must be subject to reason. The mind must have a power to govern these lower faculties, that he might not offend against the law of his creation.

"He must also have his heart inlaid with love to the

creatures, especially those of his own species, if he should be placed among them: and with a principle of honesty and truth in dealing with them. And if many of those creatures were made at once, there would be no pride, malice, or envy, no falsehood, no brawls or contentions among them, but all harmony and love." (Dr. Watts,)

Sober as these views are of man's primitive state, it is not, perhaps, possible for us fully to conceive of so exalted a condition as even

this. Below this standard it could not fall; and that it implied a glory, and dignity, and moral greatness of a very exalted kind, is made sufficiently apparent from the degree of guilt charged upon Adam when he fell, for 2the aggravating circumstances of his offence may well be deduced from the tremendous consequences which followed.

The creation of man in the moral image of God being so clearly stated in the Scriptures, it would be difficult to conceive in what

manner their testimony, in this point, could be evaded, did we not know the readiness with which some minds form objections, and how little ingenuity is required to make objections plausible, The objection to this clearly revealed truth is thus stated by Dr. Taylor, of Norwich, and it has been followed in substance, and with only some variation of phrase, by the Socinians of the present day. "Adam could not be originally created in righteousness and true holiness; because habits of holiness cannot

be created without our knowledge, concurrence, or consent; for holiness in its nature implies the choice and consent of a moral agent, without which it cannot be holiness." If, however, it has been established that God made man upright; that he was created in "knowledge," "righteousness," and "true holiness;" and that at his creation he was pronounced very good; all this falls to the ground, and is the vain reasoning of man against the explicit testimony of God. The

fallacy is, however, easily detected.

'It lies in confounding "habits of holiness" with the principle of holiness.' Now though habit is the result of acts, and acts of voluntary choice; yet if the choice be a right one, and right it must be in order to an act of holiness, and if this right choice, frequently exerted, produces so many acts as shall form what is called a habit, then either the principle from which that right choice arises must be good or bad, or neither. If neither, a right

choice has no cause at all; if bad, a right choice could not originate from it; if good, then there may be a holy principle in man, a right nature before choice, and so that part of the argument falls to the ground. Now, in Adam, that rectitude of principle from which a right choice and right acts flowed, was either created with him or formed by his own volitions. If the latter be affirmed, then he must have willed right before he had a principle of rectitude, which is absurd; if the former, then his creation in

a state of moral rectitude, with an aptitude and disposition to good is established.

Mr. Wesley thus answers the objection:- "What is holiness? Is it not essentially love? The love of God and of all mankind? Love producing ' bowels of mercies,' humbleness of mind, meekness, gentleness, long suffering? And cannot God shed abroad this love in any soul, without his concurrence 1 Antecedent to his knowledge or consent? And supposing

this to be done, will love change its nature? Will it be no longer holiness? This argument can never be sustained; unless you would play with the word habits. Love is holiness wherever it exists. And God could create either men or angels, endued from the very first moment of their existence, with whatsoever degree of love he pleased.

"You think, on the contrary, it is demonstration, that we cannot be righteous or holy, we cannot observe what is right without our

own free and explicit choice.' I suppose you mean practice what is right. But a man may be righteous before he does what is right, holy in heart before he is holy in life. The confounding these two all along, seems; the ground of your strange imagination, that Adam must choose to be, righteous, must exercise thought and reflection before he could be righteous.' Why so? 'Because righteousness is the right use and application of our powers.' Here is your capital mistake. No, it is not; it is

the right stale of our powers. It is the right disposition of our soul, the right temper of our mind. Take this with you, and you will no more dream, that

`God could not create man in righteousness and true holiness.'" (Original Sin,) President Edwards's answer is:-

"I think it a contradiction to the nature of things as judged of by the common sense of mankind.

It is agreeable to the sense of men, in all nations and ages, not only that the fruit

or effect of a good choice is virtuous, but that the good choice itself, from whence that effect proceeds, is so; yea, also the antecedent food, disposition, temper, or affection of mind, from whence proceeds that good choice is virtuous This is the general notion-not that principles derive their goodness from actions, but-that actions derive their goodness from the principles whence they proceed; so that the act of choosing what is good, is no farther virtuous than it proceeds from a good principle or virtuous] -

disposition of mind. Which supposes that a virtuous disposition of mind may be before a virtuous act of choice; and that, therefore, it is not necessary there should first be thought, reflection, and choice, before there can be any virtuous disposition. If the choice be first, before the existence of a good disposition of heart, what is the character of that choice?

There can, according to our natural notions, be no virtue in a choice which proceeds from no virtuous

principle, but from mere self-love, ambition, or some animal appetites; therefore, a virtuous temper of mind may be before a good act of choice, as a tree may be before the fruit, and the fountain before the stream which proceeds from it." (Original Sin.) The final cause of man's creation was the display of the glory of God, and principally of his moral perfections. Among these, benevolence shone with eminent luster. The creation of rational and holy creatures was the only means, as it appears to us,

of accomplishing that most paternal and benevolent design, to impart to other beings a portion of the Divine felicity. The happiness of God is the result of his moral perfection, and it is complete and perfect. It is also specific; it is the felicity of knowledge, of conscious rectitude, of sufficiency, and independence. Of the two former, creatures were capable; but only rational creatures. Matter, however formed, is unconscious, and is, and must forever remain, incapable of

happiness. However disposed and adorned, it was made for another, and not at all with reference to itself, If it be curiously wrought, it is for some other's wonder; if it has use, it is for another's convenience; if it has beauty, it is for another's eye; if harmony, it is for another's ear, Irrational animate creatures may derive advantage from mere matter; but it does not appear that they are conscious of it. They have the enjoyment of sense, but not the powers of reflection, comparison, and

taste. They see without admiration, they combine nothing into relations. So to know, as to be conscious of knowing, and to feel the pleasures of knowledge; so to know, as to impart knowledge to others; so to know, as to lay the basis of future and, enlarging knowledge, as to discover the efficient and the final causes of things; and to enjoy the pleasures of discovery and certainty of imagination and taste, - this is peculiar to rational beings. Above all, to know the great Creator and Lord of all; to see the

distinctions of right and wrong, of good and evil in his law; to have, therefore, the consciousness of integrity and of well-ordered and perfectly balanced passions; to feel the felicity of universal and unbounded benevolence; to be conscious of the favor of God himself; to have perfect confidence in his care and constant benediction; to adore him; to be grateful; to exert hope without limit on future and unceasing blessings; all these sources of felicity were added to the pleasures of intellect and

imagination in the creation of rational beings.

In whatever part of the universe they were created and placed, we have sufficient reason to believe that this was the primitive condition of all; and we know, assuredly, from God's own revelation, that it was the condition of man. In his creation and primeval condition, the "kindness and love of God" eminently appeared. He was made a rational and immortal spirit, with no limits to the constant enlargement of his powers;

for, from all the evidence that our own consciousness, even in our fallen state, affords us, it appears possible to the human soul to be eternally approaching the infinite in intellectual strength and attainment, He was made holy and happy; he was admitted to intercourse with God. He was not left alone, but had the pleasure of society. He was placed in a world of grandeur, harmony, beauty, and utility; it was canopied with other distant worlds to exhibit to his very sense a manifestation of the extent

of space and the vastness of the varied universe; and to call both his reason, his fancy, and his devotion, into their most vigorous and salutary exercises. He was placed in a paradise, where, probably, all that was sublime and gentle in the scenery of the whole earth was exhibited in pattern; and all that could delight the innocent sense, and excite the curious inquiries of the mind, was spread before him.

He had labor to employ his at-tendon, without wearying him; and time for

his highest pursuits of 2knowing God, his will, and his works. All was a manifestation of universal love, of which he was the chief visible object; and the felicity and glory of his condition must, by his and their obedience in succession, have descended to his posterity forever. Such was our world, and its rational inhabitants, the first pair; and thus did its creation manifest not only the power and wisdom, but the benevolence of Deity. He made them like himself, and he made them capable of a happiness like his own.

The case of man is now so obviously different, that the change cannot be denied. The Scriptural method of accounting for this is the disobedience of our first parents; and the visitation of their sin upon their posterity, in the altered condition of the material world, in the corrupt moral state in which men are born, and in that afflictive condition which is universally imposed upon them.

The testimony of the sacred writings to what is called, in theological language, the

fall of man, (9) is, therefore, to be next considered.

(9) This phrase does not occur in the canonical Scriptures; but is, probably, taken from Wisdom x, 1, "She preserved the first formed father of the world that was created; and brought him out of his fall."

The Mosaic account of this event is, that a garden having been planted by the Creator, for the use of man, he was placed in it, "to dress it, and to keep it;" that in this garden two

trees were specially distinguished, one as "the tree of life," the other as "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil;" that, from eating of the latter Adam was restrained by positive interdict, and by the penalty, "in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die:" that the serpent, who was more subtle than any beast of the field, tempted the woman to eat, by denying that death would be the consequence, and by assuring her, that her eyes and her husband's eyes "would be opened," and

that they would "be as gods, knowing good and evil:" that the woman took of the fruit, gave of it to her husband, who also ate; that for this act of disobedience they were expelled from the garden, made subject to death, and laid under other maledictions.

That this history should be the subject of much criticism, not only by infidels, whose objections to it have been noticed in the first part of this work; but by those who hold false and perverted views of the Christian system, was to be

expected. Taken in its natural and obvious sense, along with the comments of the subsequent scriptures, it teaches the doctrines of the existence of an evil, tempting, invisible spirit, going about seeking whom he may deceive and devour; of the introduction of a state of moral corruptness into human nature, which has been transmitted to all men; and of a vicarious atonement for sin: and wherever the fundamental truths of the Christian system are denied, attempts will be made so to

interpret this part of the Mosaic history as to obscure the testimony which it gives to them, either explicitly, or by just induction. Interpreters of this account of the lapse of the first pair, and the origin of evil, as to the human race, have adopted various and often strange theories; but those whose opinions it seems necessary to notice may be divided into those who deny the literal sense of the relation entirely; those who take the account to be in part literal and in part allegorical; and those who, while they contend

earnestly for the literal interpretation of every part of the history, consider some of the terms used, and some of the persons introduced, as conveying a meaning more extensive than the letter, and as constituting several symbols of spiritual things and of spiritual beings.

Those who have denied the literal sense entirely, and regard the whole relation as an instructive mythos, or fable, have, as might be expected, when all restraint of authority was thus thrown off from the

imagination, adopted very different interpretations. Thus we have been taught, that this account Was intended to teach the evil of yielding to the violence of appetite and to its control over reason; or the introduction of vice in conjunction with knowledge and the artificial refinements of society; or the necessity of keeping the great mass of man-kind from acquiring too great a degree of knowledge, as being hurtful to society; or as another version of the story of the golden age, and its being

succeeded by times more vicious and miserable; or as designed, enigmatically, to account for the origin of evil, or of mankind. This catalogue of opinions might be much enlarged: some of them have been held by mere visionaries; others by men of learning, especially by several of the semi-infidel theologians and Biblical critics of Germany; and our own country has not been exempt from this class of free expositors. How to fix upon the moral of "the fable" is, however, the difficulty; and this variety

of opinion is a sufficient refutation of the general notion assumed by the whole class, since scarcely can two of them be found who adopt the same interpretation, after they have discarded the literal acceptation.

But that the account of Moses is to be taken as a matter of real history, and according to its literal import, is established by two considerations, against which, as being facts, nothing can successfully be urged. The first is, that the account of the fall of the

first pair is a part of a continuous history. The creation of the world, of man, of woman; the planting of the garden of Eden, and the placing of man there; the duties and prohibitions laid upon him; his disobedience; his expulsion from the garden; the subsequent birth of his children, their lives and actions, and those of their posterity, down to the flood; and, from that event, to the life of Abraham, are given in the same plain and unadorned narrative, brief, but yet simple, and with no intimation at all, either

from the elevation of the style or otherwise, that a fable or allegory is in any part introduced. If this, then, be the case, and the evidence of it lies upon the very face of the history, it is clear, that if the account of the fall be excerpted from the whole narrative as allegorical, any subsequent part, from Abel to Noah, from Noah to Abraham, from Abraham to Moses, may be excerpted for the same reason, which is neither more nor less than this, that it does not agree with the theological opinions of the interpreter;

and thus the whole of the Pentateuch may be rejected as a history, and converted into fable. One of these consequences must, therefore, follow, either that the account of the fall must be taken as history, or the historical character of the whole five books of Moses must be unsettled; and if none but infidels will go to the latter consequence, then no one who admits the Pentateuch to be a true history generally, can consistently refuse to admit the story of the fall of the first pair to be a narrative of real

events, because it is written in the same style, and presents the same character of a continuous record of events, So conclusive has this argument been felt, that the anti-literal interpreters have endeavored to evade it, by asserting that the part of the history of Moses in question bears marks of being a separate fragment, more ancient than the Pentateuch itself, and transcribed into it by Moses, the author and compiler of the whole. This point is examined and satisfactorily refuted in the

learned and excellent work referred to below; (1) but it is easy to show, that it would amount to nothing, if granted, in the mind of any who is satisfied on the previous question of the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures. For let it be admitted that Moses, in writing the Pentateuchal history, availed himself of the traditions of the patriarchal ages, a supposition not in the least inconsistent with his inspiration or with the absolute truth of his history, since the traditions so introduced have been

authenticated by the Holy Spirit; or let it be supposed, which is wholly gratuitous, that he made use of previously existing documents; and that some differences of style in his books may be traced, which serve to point out his quotations, which also is an assumption, or rather a position, which some of the best Hebraists have denied, yet two things are to be noted: first, that the inspired character of the books of Moses is authenticated by our Lord and his apostles, so that they must necessarily be

wholly true, and free from real contradictions; and, secondly, that to make it any thing to their purpose who contend that the account of the fell is an older document, introduced by Moses, it ought to be shown that it is not written as truly in the narrative style, even if it could be proved to be - in some respects a different style, as that which precedes and follows it. Now the very literal character of our translation will enable even the unlearned reader to discover this. Whether it be

an embodied tradition or the insertion of a more ancient document, (though there is no foundation at all for the latter supposition,) it is obviously a narrative, and a narrative as simple as any which precedes or follows it.

(1) Holden's Dissertation on the Fall of Man, chap. ii. In this volume the literal sense of the Mosaic account of the fall is largely investigated and ably established.

The other indisputable fact to which I just now adverted, as establishing

the literal sense of the history, is that, as such, it is referred to and reasoned upon in various parts of Scripture.

Job 20:4, 5, "Knowest thou not this of old, since man was placed upon earth, that the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment?" The first part of the quotation "might as well have been rendered, 'since adam was placed on the earth.' There is no reason to doubt but that this passage refers to the fall and the first sin of man.

The date agrees, for the knowledge here taught is said to arise from facts as old as the first placing of man upon earth, and the sudden punishment of the iniquity corresponds to the Mosaic account, - ' tie triumphing of the wicked is short, his joy but for a moment.'" (Sherlock on Prophecy.) Job 31:33, "If I covered my transgression as adam, by hiding my iniquity in my bosom." Magee renders the verse, -

"Did I cover, like Adam, my transgression,

By hiding in a lurking place mine iniquity?"

and adds, "I agree with Peters, that this contains a reference to the history of the first man, and his endeavors to hide himself after his transgression." (Discourses on the Atonement.) Our margin reads, "after the manner of men;" and also the old versions; but the Chaldee paraphrase agrees with our translation, which is also satisfactorily defended by numerous critics.

Job 15:14, "What is man, that he should be clean;

and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?" Why not clean? Did God make woman or man unclean at the beginning?

If he did, the expostulation would have been more apposite, and much stronger, had the true cause been assigned, and Job had said, "How canst thou expect cleanness in man, whom thou createdst unclean?" But, as the case now stands, the expostulation has a plain reference to the introduction of vanity and

corruption by the sin of the woman, and is an evidence that this ancient writer was sensible of the evil consequences of the fall upon the whole race of man.

"Eden" and "the garden of the Lord" are also frequently referred to in the prophets. We have the

"tree of life" mentioned several times in the Proverbs and in the Revelation. "God," says Solomon, "made man upright." The enemies of Christ and his Church are spoken of, both in the Old

and New Testaments, under the names of "the serpent," and "the dragon;" and the habit of the serpent to lick the dust is also referred to by Isaiah.

If the history of the fall, as recorded by Moses, were an allegory, or anything but a literal history, several of the above allusions would have no meaning; but the matter is put beyond all possible doubt in the New Testament, unless the same culpable liberties be taken with the interpretation of the words of our Lord and of St. Paul as with those of

the Jewish lawgiver. Our Lord says, Matt, 19:4, 5, "Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning, made them male and female; and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh?" This is an argument on the subject of divorces, and its foundation rests upon two of the facts recorded by Moses. 1. That God made at first but two human beings, from whom all the rest have sprung. 2. That the intimacy and indissolubility of the

marriage relation rests upon the formation of the woman from the man; for our Lord quotes the words in Genesis, where the obligation of man to cleave to his wife is immediately connected with that circumstance. "And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh." This is sufficiently in proof that both our Lord and the

Pharisees considered this early part of the history of Moses as a narrative; for, otherwise, it would neither have been a reason, on his part, for the doctrine which he was inculcating, nor have had any force of conviction as to them.

"In Adam," says the Apostle Paul, "all die;" "by one man sin entered into the world." "But I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."

In the last passage, the instrument of the temptation is said to be a serpent, (ophis,) which is a sufficient answer to those who would make it any other animal; and Eve is represented as being first seduced, according to the account in Genesis. This St. Paul repeats, in 1 Tim. 2:13, 14, "Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, (first, or immediately,) but the woman being deceived was in the transgression." And offers this as the reason of his injunction, "Let the woman learn in

silence, with all subjection." When, therefore, it is considered, that these passages are introduced, not for rhetorical illustration, or in the way of classical quotation, but are made the basis of grave and important reasonings, which embody some of the most important doctrines of the Christian revelation; and of important social duties and points of Christian order and decorum; it would be to charge the writers of the New Testament with the grossest absurdity, with

even culpable and unworthy trifling, to suppose them to argue from the history of the fall, as a narrative, when they knew it to be an allegory; and if we are, therefore, compelled to allow that it was understood as a real history by our Lord and his inspired apostles, those speculations of modern critics, which convert it into a parable, stand branded with their true character of infidel and semi-infidel temerity.

The objections which are made to the historical

character of this account are either those of open unbelievers and scoffers; or such as are founded precisely upon the same allegations of supposed absurdity and unsuitableness to which such persons resort, and which suppose that man is a competent judge of the proceedings of his Maker, and that the latter ought to regulate his conduct and requirements by what the former may think fit or unfit. If the literal interpretation of the first chapter in Genesis could be proved inconsistent with

other parts of Holy Writ, then, indeed, we should be compelled to adopt the mode of explanation by allegory; but if no reason more weighty can be offered for so violent a proceeding, than that men either object to the doctrines which the literal account includes; or that the recorded account of the actual dealings of God with the first man, does not comport with their notions of what was fit in such circumstances, we should hold truth with little tenacity, were we to surrender it to the enemy

upon such a summons. The fallacy of most of these objections is, however, easily pointed out.

We are asked, first, whether it is reasonable to suppose, that the fruit of the tree of life could confer immortality? But what is there irrational in supposing that, though Adam was made exempt from death, yet that the fruit of a tree should be the appointed instrument of preserving his health, repairing the wastes of his animal nature, and of

maintaining him in perpetual youth?

Almighty God could have accomplished this end without means, or by other means; but since he so often employs instruments, it is not more strange that he should ordain to preserve Adam permanently from death by food of a special quality, than that now he should preserve men in health and life, for three-score years and ten, by specific foods; and that, to counteract disorders, he should have given specific medicinal

qualities to herbs and minerals: or if, with some, we regard the eating of the tree of life as a sacramental act, an expression of faith in the promise of continued preservation, and a means through which the conserving influence of God was bestowed, a notion, however, not so well founded as the other, it is yet not inconsistent with the literal interpretation, and involves no really unreasonable consequence, and nothing directly contrary to the analogy of faith. It has been, also,

foolishly enough asked whether the fruit of the prohibited tree, or of any tree, can be supposed to have communicated "knowledge of good and evil," or have had any effect at all upon the intellectual powers? But this is not the idea conveyed by the history, however literally taken, and the objection is groundless. That tree might surely, without the least approach to allegory, be called "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil,"

whether we understand by this, that by eating it man came to know, by sad experience, the value of the "good" he had forfeited, and the bitterness of "evil," which he had before known only in name; or, as others have understood it, that it was appointed to be the test of Adam's fidelity to his Creator, and, consequently, was a tree of the knowledge of good and evil, a tree for the purpose of knowing (or making known) whether he would cleave to the former, or make choice of the latter. The first of these

interpretations is, I think, to be preferred, because it better harmonizes with the whole history; but either of them is consistent with a literal interpretation, and cannot be proved to involve any real absurdity,

To the account of the serpent, it has been objected that, taken literally, it makes the invisible tempter assume the body of an animal to carry on his designs; but we must be better acquainted with the nature and laws of disembodied spirits before we can prove

this to be impossible, or even unlikely; and as for an animal being chosen as the means of approach to Eve, without exciting suspicion, it is manifest that, allowing a superior spirit to be the real tempter, it was good policy in him to address Eve through an animal which she must have noticed as one of the in. habitants of the garden, rather than in a human form, when she knew that herself and her husband were the only human beings as yet in existence, The presence of such a stranger would have been

much more likely to put her on her guard. But then, we are told that the animal was a contemptible reptile. Certainly not before he was degraded in form; but, on the contrary, one of the "beasts of the earth," and not a "creeping thing;" and also more "subtle," more discerning and sagacious "than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made" - consequently the head of all the inferior animals in intellect, and not unlikely to have been of a corresponding noble and beautiful form; for this, indeed, his bodily

degradation imports. (2) If there was policy, then, in Satan's choosing an animal as the instrument by which he might make his approaches, there was as much good taste in his selection as the allegorists, who seem anxious on this point, can wish for him. The speaking of the serpent is another stumbling-block; but as the argument is not here with an infidel, but with those who profess to receive the Mosaic record as Divine, the speaking of the serpent is no more a reason for interpreting the relation allegorically, than

the speaking of the ass of Balaam can be for allegorizing the whole of that transaction. That a good or an evil spirit has no power to produce articulate sounds from the organs of an animal, no philosophy can prove, and it is a fact which is, therefore, capable of being rationally substantiated by testimony.

There is a clear reason, too, for this use of the power of Satan in the story itself. By his giving speech to the serpent, and representing that, as appears from the account, as a consequence

of the serpent having himself eaten of the fruit, (3) he took the most effectual means of impressing Eve with the dangerous and fatal notion, that the prohibition of the tree of knowledge was a restraint upon her happiness and intellectual improvement, and thus to suggest hard thoughts of her Maker. The objection that Eve manifested no surprise when she heard an animal speak, whom she must have known not to have had that faculty before, has also no weight, since that circumstance

might have occurred without being mentioned in so brief a history. It is still more likely that Adam should have expressed some marks of surprise and anxiety too, when his wife presented the fruit to him, though nothing of the kind is mentioned. But allowing that no surprise was indicated by the woman, the answer of the author just quoted is satisfactory.

(2) We have no reason at all to suppose, as it is strangely done almost uniformly by commentators, that this

animal had the serpentine form in any mode or degree at all before his transformation. That he was then degraded to a reptile, to go "upon his belly," imports, on the contrary, an entire alteration and loss of the original form-a form of which it is clear no idea can now be conceived.

"In such a state, reason must enjoy a calm dominion; and consequently there was no room for those sudden starts of imagination, or those sudden tumults,

agitations, failures, and stagnations of the blood and spirits now incident to human nature; and therefore Eve was incapable of fear or surprise from such accidents as would disquiet the best of her posterity. This objection then is so far from prejudicing the truth of the Mosaic history, that to me I own it a strong presumption in its favor.

"But after all, if this objection has any weight with any one, let him consider what there is in this philosophic serenity of

our first parent, supposing the whole of her conduct on this occasion fully related to us, so far exceeding the serenity of Fabricius, upon the sudden appearance and cry of the elephant contrived by Pyrrhus to discompose him; or the steadiness of Brutus upon the appearance of his evil genius; and yet I believe Plutarch no way suffers in his credit as a historian by the relation of those events; at least had he related those surprising accidents without saying one word of what effects

they had upon the passions of the persons concerned, his relations had certainly been liable to no imputation of incredibility or improbability upon that account." (Revelation Examined.)

An objection is taken to the justice of the sentence pronounced on the serpent, if the transaction be accounted real, and if that animal were but the unconscious instrument of the great seducer.

To this the reply is obvious, that it could be no matter of just complaint to the

serpent that its form should be changed, and its species lowered in the scale of being. It had no original right to its former superior rank, but held it at the pleasure of the Creator. If special pain and sufferings had been inflicted upon the serpent, there would have been a semblance of plausibility in the objection; but the serpent suffered, as to liability to pain and death, no more than other animals, and was not therefore any more than another irrational creature, accounted a responsible offender. Its

degradation was evidently intended as a memento to man, and the real punishment, as we shall show, fell upon the real transgressor who used the serpent as his instrument; while the enmity of the whole race of serpents to the human race, their cunning, and their poisonous qualities, appear to have been wisely and graciously intended as standing warnings to us to beware of that great spiritual enemy, whoever lies in wait to wound and to destroy, These are the principal objections made

to the literal interpretation of this portion of the Mosaic record, and we have seen that they are either of no weight in themselves, or that they cannot be entertained without leading to a total disregard of other parts of the inspired Scriptures.

Tradition, too, comes in to the support of the literal sense, and on such a question has great weight. The Apocryphal writings afford a satisfactory testimony of the sentiments of the Jews. 2Esdras 3:4-7, "O Lord,

thou barest rule, thou spakest at the beginning, when thou didst plant the earth, and that thyself alone, and commandest the people; and gavest a body to Adam without soul, which was the workmanship of thy hands, and didst breathe into him the breath of life, and he was made living before thee; and thou leddest him into paradise, which thy right hand had planted, and unto him thou gavest commandment to love thy way, which he transgressed, and immediately thou

appointedst death in him and in his generations, of whom came nations, tribes, people, and kindreds out of number." 2 Esdras 7:48, "O thou Adam, what hast thou done? For though it was thou that sinned, thou art not fallen alone, but we are all that came of thee."

Wisdom 2:24, "Nevertheless, through envy of the devil came death into the world." Wisdom 10:1, "She (wisdom) preserved the first-formed father of the world, that was created alone, and brought him out

of his fall."Ecclesiasticus 17:1, &c, "The Lord created man of the earth, and turned him into it again. He gave them a few days and a short time, and also power over all things therein-he filled them with the knowledge of understanding, and showed them good and evil." By these ancient Jewish writers it is, therefore, certain, that the account of the fall was understood as the narrative of a real transaction; and. except on this assumption, it is impossible to account for those traditions which

are embodied in the mythology of almost all pagan nations.

Of these fables the basis must have been some fact, real or supposed; for as well might we expect the fables of Aesop to have impressed themselves on the religious ceremonies and belief of nations, as the Mosaic fable of man's fall; for a mere fable it must be accounted, if it is to lose its literal interpretation.

Popular convictions everywhere prevailed of the existence of some beings of the higher order, who had

revolted from their subjection to the heavenly power which presided over the universe; and upon them were raised many fabulous stories. It is probable, that these convictions were originally founded on the circumstances referred to in Scripture with respect to Satan and his angels, as powerful malevolent beings, who, having first seduced Adam from his obedience, incessantly labored to deceive, corrupt, and destroy his descendants. The notion of the magi of Plutarch, and

of the Manicheans, concerning two independent principles, acting in opposition to each other, was also founded on the real circumstances of the apostasy of angels, and of their interference and influence in the affairs of men. The fictions of Indian mythology with regard to contending powers, and their subordinate ministers, benevolent and malignant, were erected on the same basis of truth; and the Grecian and Roman accounts of the battles of the giants against Jupiter, were, perhaps,

built on the corruptions of tradition on this point.

"The original temptation, by which Satan drew our first parents from their duty, and led them to transgress the only prohibition which God had imposed, is described in the first pages of Scripture; and it is repeated, under much disguise, in many fables of classical mythology,

"Origen considers the allegorical relations furnished by Plato, with respect to Porus tempted by Penia to sin when

intoxicated in the garden of Jove, as a disfigured history of the fall of man in paradise. It seems to have been blended with the story of Lot and his daughters. Plato might have acquired in Egypt the knowledge of the original circum. stances of the fall, and have produced them, under the veil of allegory, that he might not offend the Greeks by a direct extract from the Jewish Scriptures. The heathen notions with respect to the Elysian fields, the garden of Adonis, and that of Hesperides, in which the

fruit was watched by a serpent, were probably borrowed from the sacred accounts, or from traditional reports with respect to paradise.

"The worship established toward the evil spirit by his contrivance, sometimes under the very appearance in which he seduced our first parents, is to be found among the Phenicians and Egyptians. The general notion of the serpent as a mysterious symbol annexed to the heathen deities; and the invocation of Eve in the Bacchanalian

orgies, (with the production of a serpent, consecrated as an emblem, to public view,) seems to bear some relation to the history of the first temptation, which introduced sin and death into the world. The account of discord being cast out from heaven, referred to by Agamemnon, in the nineteenth book of Homer's Iliad, has been thought to be a corrupt tradition of the fall of the evil angels. Claudian shows an acquaintance with the circumstances of the seduction of man, and of

an ejection from paradise, and his description seems to have furnished subjects of imitation to Milton.

"It has been imagined that the Indians entertained some notions, founded on traditionary accounts, of paradise: and the representations of the serpent under the female form, and styled the Mexican Eve, are said to be found in the symbolical paintings of Mexico.

"The original perfection of man, the corruption of human nature resulting from the fall, and the

increasing depravity which proceeded with augmented violence from generation to generation, are to be found in various parts of profane literature. Chryalus, the Pythagorean, declared that man was made in the image of God. Cicero (as well as Ovid) speaks of man as created erect, as if God excited him to look up to his former relation and ancient abode. The loss of his resemblance to God was supposed to have resulted from disobedience, and was considered as so universal, that it was generally

admitted, as it is expressed by Horace, that no man was born without vices.

The conviction of a gradual deterioration from age to age-of a change from a golden period, by successive transitions, to an iron depravity-of a lapse from a state devoid of guilt and fear, to times filled with iniquity, was universally entertained.

"Descriptions to this effect are to be found in the writings of almost all the poets, and they are confirmed by the reports of philosophers and

historians. Providence seems to have drawn evidence of the guilt of men from their own confessions, and to have preserved their testimonies for the conviction of subsequent times." (Gray's Connection,) In the Gothic mythology, which seems to have been derived from the east, thor is represented as the first-born of the supreme God, and is styled in the Edda the eldest of sons. He was esteemed a middle divinity, a mediator between God and man. With respect to his actions, he is said to have wrestled

with death, and, in the struggle, to have been brought upon one knee; to have bruised the head of the serpent with his mace; and, in his final engagement with that monster, to have beat him to the earth and slain him. This victory, however, is not obtained but at the expense of his own life;- "Recoiling back nine steps, he falls dead upon the spot, suffocated with the floods of venom which the serpent vomits forth upon him." Much the same notion, we are informed, is prevalent in the mythology of the

Hindus. - "Two sculptured figures are yet extant in one of their oldest pagodas, the former of which represents Krishna, an incarnation of their mediatorial God Vishnu, trampling on the crushed head of the serpent; while in the latter it is seen encircling the deity in its folds, and biting his heel." An engraving of this curious sculpture is given in Moore's Hindu Pantheon.

As to those who would interpret the account, the literal meaning of which we

have endeavored to establish, partly literally, and partly allegorically, a satisfactory answer is given in the following observations of Bishop Horsley:-

"No writer of true history would mix plain matter of fact with allegory in one continued narrative, without any intimation of a transition from one to the other. If, therefore, any part of this narrative be matter of fact, no part is allegorical. On the other hand, if any part be allegorical, no part is naked

matter of fact: and the consequence of this will be, that everything in every part of the whole narrative must be allegorical. If the formation of the woman out of the man be allegory, the woman must be an allegorical woman. The man therefore must be an allegorical man; for of such a man only the allegorical woman will be a meet companion. If the man is allegorical, his paradise will be an allegorical garden; the trees that grow in it, allegorical trees; the rivers that watered it, allegorical rivers; and thus

we may ascend to the very beginning of the creation; and conclude at last, that the heavens are allegorical heavens, and the earth an allegorical earth. Thus the whole history of the creation will be an allegory, of which the real subject is not disclosed; and in this absurdity the scheme of allegorizing ends." (Horsley's Sermons.)

But though the literal sense of the history is thus established, yet that it has in several parts, but in perfect accordance with the literal interpretation, a

mystical and higher sense than the letter, is equally to be proved from the Scriptures; and, though some writers, who have maintained the literal interpretation inviolate, have run into unauthorized fancies in their interpretation of the mystical sense, that is no reason why we ought not to go to the full length to which the light of the Scriptures, an infallible comment upon themselves, will conduct us. It is, as we have seen, matter of established history, that our first parents were

prohibited from the tree of knowledge, and, after their fall, were excluded from the tree of life; that they were tempted by a serpent; and that various maledictions were passed upon them, and upon the instrument of their seduction, But, rightly to understand this history, it is necessary to recollect- that man was in a state of trial;- that the prohibition of a certain fruit was but one part of the law under which he was placed;- that the serpent was but the instrument of the real tempter; and that the curse

pronounced on the instrument was symbolical of the punishment reserved for the agent.

The first of these particulars appears on the face of the history, and to a state of trial the power of moral freedom was essential. This is a subject on which we shall have occasion to speak more at large in the sequel; but, that the power of choosing good and evil was vested with our first parents is as apparent from the account as that they were placed under rule and restraint. In

vain were they commanded to obey, if obedience were impossible; in vain placed under prohibition, if they had no power to resist temptation. Both would, indeed, have been unworthy the Divine legislator; and if this be allowed, then their moral freedom must also be conceded. They are contemplated throughout the whole transaction, not as instruments, but as actors, and as such, capable of reward and punishment. Commands are issued to them; which supposes a power of obedience, either

original and permanent in themselves, or derived, by the use of means, from God, and, therefore, attainable; and however the question may be darkened by metaphysical subtleties, the power to obey necessarily implied the power to refuse and rebel. The promised continuance of their happiness, which is to be viewed in the light of a reward, implies the one; the actual infliction of punishment as certainly includes the other.

The power of obeying and the power of disobeying being then mutually involved, that which determines to the one or to the other, is the will. For, if it were some power, ab extra, operating necessarily, man would no longer be an actor, but be reduced to the mere condition of a patient, the mere instrument of another. This does not, however, shut out solicitation and strong influence from without, provided it be allowed to be resistible, either by man's own strength, or by

strength from a higher source, to which he may have access, and by which he may fortify himself. But as no absolute control can be externally exerted over man's actions, and he remain accountable; and, on the other hand, as his actions are in fact controllable in a manner consistent with his free agency, we must look for this power in his own mind; and the only faculty which he possesses, to which any such property can be attributed, is called, for that very reason, and because of that very

quality, his will or choice; a power by which, in that state of completeness and excellence in which Adam was created, he must be supposed to be able to command his thoughts, his desires his words, and his conduct, however excited, with an absolute sovereignty.

(4)

(4) "Impulsus etsi vehemens valde atque potens esset, voluntatis tamen imperio atque arbitrio semper egressus ejus in actum subjiciebatur. Poterat enim voluntas,

divinae voluntatis consideratione armata, resistere illi, eumque in ordinem ista vi redigere; alioquin enim frustanea fuisset legislatio, qua affectus circumscribebatur et refraenabatur." (Episcopius, Disputatio ix.) This faculty of willing, indeed, appears essential to a rational being, in whatever rank he may be placed. "Every rational being," says Dr. Jenkins, very justly, (Reasonableness of Christian Religion,) "must naturally have a liberty of choice, that is, it must have

a will to choose as well as an understanding to reason; because, a faculty of understanding, if left to itself without a will to determine it, must always think of the same objects, or proceed in a continued series and connection of thoughts, without any end or design, which would be labor in vain, and tedious thoughtfulness to no purpose." But, though will be essential to rational existence, and freedom of will to a creature placed in a state of trial, yet the degree of external influence upon its

determinations, through whatever means it may operate, may be very different both in kind and degree; which is only saying, in other words, that the circumstances of trial may be varied, and made more easy or more difficult and dangerous, at the pleasure of the great Governor and Lord of all. Some who have written on this subject, seem to have carried their views of the circumstances of the paradisiacal probation too high; others have not placed them high enough.

The first have represented our first parents to have been so exclusively intellectual and devotional, as to be almost out of the reach of temptation from sense and passion; others, as approximating too nearly to their mortal and corrupt descendants. This, however, is plain, from the Scriptures, the guide we ought scrupulously to follow, that they were subject to temptation, or solicitation of the will, from intellectual pride, from sense, and from passion. - The two first operated on Eve, and probably also on

Adam; to which was added, in him, a passionate subjection to the wishes of his wife. (5) If, then, these are the facts of their temptation, the circumstances of their trial are apparent. "The soul of man," observes Stillingfleet, (Origines Sacrae,) "is seated in the middle, as it were, between those more excellent beings which live perpetually above, with which it par takes in the sublimity of its nature and understanding; and those inferior terrestrial beings with which it communicates

through the vital union which it has with the body, and that by reason of its natural freedom, it is sometimes assimilated to the one and sometimes to the other of these extremes. We must observe, farther, that, in this compound nature of ours, there are several powers and faculties, several passions and affections, differing in their nature and tendency, according as they result from the soul or body; that each of these has its proper object, in a due application to which it is easy and

satisfied; that they are none of them sinful in themselves, but may be instruments of much good, when rightly applied, as well as occasion great mischief by a misapplication: whereupon a considerable part of virtue will consist in regulating them, and in keeping our sensitive part subject to the rational. This is the original constitution of our nature; and, since the first man was endowed with the powers and faculties of the mind, and had the same dispositions and inclinations of body, it

cannot be but that he must have been liable to the same sort of temptations, and consequently, capable of complying with the dictates of sense and appetite, contrary to the direction of reason and the conviction of his own mind: and to this cause the Scripture seems to ascribe the commission of the first sin, when it tells us, that the woman saw the tree, that it was good for food, and pleasant to the eye, and desirable to make one wise, i.e, it had several qualities that were adapted to her natural appetites;

was beautiful to the sight, and delightful to the taste, and improving to the under-standing, which both answered the desire of knowledge implanted in her spiritual, and the love of sensual pleasure, resulting from her animal part; and these, heightened by the suggestions of the tempter, abated the horror of God's prohibition, and induced her to act contrary to his express command."

(5) "Accessit in Adamo specialis quidam conjugis propriae amor, quo adductus d gratiani illius,

affectui suo proclivius indulsit, et tentationi sathanae facilius cossit auremque praebuit."

(Epiicopiui, Disputatio ix.)

It is, therefore, manifest, that the state of trial in which our first parents were placed was one which required, in order to the preservation of virtue, vigilance, prayer, resistance, and the active exercise of the dominion of the will over solicitation. No creature can be absolutely perfect because it is finite; and it would appear, from the example

of our first parents, that an innocent, and, in its kind, a perfect rational being, is kept from falling only by "taking hold" on God; and as this is an act, there must be a determination of the will to it, and so when the least carelessness, the least tampering with the desire of forbidden gratifications is induced, there is always an enemy at hand to make use of the opportunity to darken the judgment and to accelerate the progress of evil. Thus "when desire is conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth

death." This is the only account we can obtain of the origin of evil, and it resolves itself into three principles:- 1. The necessary finiteness, and, therefore, imperfection in degree of created natures. 2, The liberty of choice, which is essential to rational, accountable beings. 3. The influence of temptation on the will. That Adam was so endowed as to have resisted the temptation, is a sufficient proof of the justice of his Maker throughout this transaction; that his

circumstances of trial were made precisely what they were, is to be resolved into a wisdom, the full manifestation of which is, probably, left to another state, and will, doubtless, there have its full declaration.

The following acute observations of Bishop Butler may assist us to conceive how possible it is for a perfectly innocent being to fall under the power of evil, whenever a vigilant and resisting habit is not perfectly and absolutely persevered in:-

"This seems distinctly conceivable, from the very nature of particular affections and propensions. For, suppose creatures intended for such a particular state of life, for which such propensions were necessary: suppose them endowed with such propensions, together with moral understanding, as well including a practical sense of virtue, as a speculative perception of it; and that all these several principles, both natural and moral, forming an inward constitution of mind, were in the most

exact proportion possible, i.e. in a proportion the most exactly adapted to their intended state of life: such creatures would be made upright, or finitely perfect. Now particular propensions, from their very nature, must be felt, the objects of them being present; though they cannot be gratified at all, or not with the allowance of the moral principle. But, if they can be gratified without its allowance, or by contradicting it; then they must be conceived to have some tendency, in how low a degree soever, yet some

tendency, to induce persons to such forbidden gratifications. This tendency, in some one particular propension, may be increased by the greater frequency of occasions naturally exciting it, than of occasions exciting others. The least voluntary indulgence in forbidden circumstances, though but in thought, will increase this wrong tendency; and may increase it farther, till, peculiar conjunctions perhaps conspiring, it becomes effect; and danger from deviating from right, ends in actual deviation

from it; a danger necessarily arising from the very nature of propension; and which, therefore, could not have been prevented, though it might have been escaped, or got innocently through. The case would be, as if we were to suppose a straight path marked out for a person, in which such a degree of attention would keep him steady: but if he would not attend in this degree, any one of a thousand objects, catching his eye, might lead him out of it. Now it is impossible to say, how much even the first full overt act of

irregularity might disorder the constitution; unsettle the adjustments, and alter the proportions, which formed it, and in which the uprightness of its make consisted: but repetition of irregularities would produce habits, and thus the constitution would be spoiled, and creatures made upright, become corrupt, and depraved in their settled character, proportionably to their repeated irregularities in occasional acts." (Analogy.)

These observations are general, and are introduced

only to illustrate the point, that we may conceive of a creature being made innocent, and yet still dependent upon the exercise of caution for its preservation from moral corruption and offence. It was not, in fact, by the slow and almost imperceptible formation of evil habits, described in the extract just given, by which Adam fell; that is but one way in which we may conceive it possible for sin to enter a holy soul. He was exposed to the wiles of a tempter, and his fall was sudden. But this exposure to a

particular danger was only a circumstance in his condition of probation. It was a varied mode of subjecting the will to solicitation; but no necessity of yielding was laid upon man in consequence of this circumstance. From the history we learn that the devil used not force but persuasion, which involves no necessity; and that the devil cannot force men to sin is sufficiently plain from this, that, such is his malevolence, that if he could render sin inevitable, he would not resort to

persuasion and the sophistry of error to accomplish an end more directly within his reach. (6) (6) "Diabolus causa talis statui non potest; gina ille suasione sola usus legitur: suasio autem necessitatem nullam affert, sod moraliter tantum voluntatem ad se allicere atque attractiere conatur." (Episcopius.)

The prohibition under which our first parents were placed has been the subject of many "a fool-born jest," and the threatened punishment has

been argued to be disproportioned to the offence. Such objections are easily dissipated. We have already seen, that all rational creatures are under a law which requires supreme love to God and entire obedience to his commands; and that, consequently, our first parents were placed under this equitable obligation. We have also seen that all specific laws emanate from this general law; that they are manifestations of it, and always suppose it. The Decalogue was such a manifestation of it to the

Jews, and the prohibition of the tree of knowledge is to be considered in the same light. Certainly this restraint presupposed a right in God to command, a duty in the creatures to obey; and the particular precept was but the exercise of that previous right which was vested in him, and the enforcement of that previous obligation upon them. To suppose it to be the only rule under which our first parents were placed would be absurd; for then it would follow, that if they had become sensual in the use

of any other food than that of the prohibited tree; or if they had refused worship and honor to God, their Creator; or if they had become "hateful, and hating one another," these would not have been sins. This precept was, however, made prominent by special injunction; and it is enough to say that it was, as the event showed, a sufficient test of their obedience.

The objection that it was a positive, and not a moral precept, deserves to be for a moment considered. The difference between the two

is, that "moral precepts are those the reasons of which we see; positive precepts those, the reasons of which we do not see. Moral duties arise out of the nature of the case itself, prior to external command: positive duties do not arise out of the nature of the case, but from external command; nor would they be duties at all, were it not for such command received from him whose creatures and subjects we are." (Butler's Analogy.) It has, however, been justly observed that, since positive precepts have

somewhat of a moral nature, we may see the reasons of them considered in this view, and, so far as we discern the reasons of both, moral and positive precepts are alike. In the case in question no just objection, certainly, can be made against the making a positive precept the special test of the obedience of our first parents. In point of obligation, positive precepts rest upon the same ground as moral ones, namely, the will of God. Granting, even, that we see no reason for them, this does not alter the case;

we are bound to obey our Creator, both as matter of right and matter of gratitude; and the very essence of sin consists in resisting the will of God. Even the reason of moral precepts, their fitness, suitableness, and influence upon society, do not constitute them absolutely obligatory upon us. The obligation rests upon their being made law by the authority of God.

Their fitness, &c, may be the reasons why he has made them parts of his law; but it is the

promulgation of his will which makes the law and brings us under obligation. In this respect, then, moral and positive laws are of equal authority when enjoined with equal explicitness. To see or not to see the reasons of the Divine enactments, whether moral or positive, is a circumstance which affects not the question of duty. There is, nevertheless, a distinction to be made between positive precepts and arbitrary ones, which have no reason but the will of him who enacts them,

though, were such enjoined by almighty God, our obligation to obey would be absolute. It is, however, proper to suppose, that when the reasons of positive precepts are not seen by us, they do, in reality, exist in those relations, and qualities, and habitudes of things which are only known to God; for, that he has a sufficient reason for all that he requires of us, is a conclusion as rational as it is pious; and to slight positive precepts, therefore, is in fact to refuse obedience to the

Lawgiver only on the proud and presumptuous ground, that he has not made us acquainted with his own reasons for enacting them. Nor is the institution of such precepts without an obvious general moral reason, though the reason for the injunction of particular positive injunctions should not be explained. Humility, which is the root of all virtue, may, in some circumstances, be more effectually promoted when we are required to obey under the authority of God, than when we are

prompted also by the conviction of the fitness and excellence of his commands. It is true, that when the observance of a moral command and a positive precept come into such opposition to one another that both cannot be observed, we have examples in Scripture which authorize us to prefer the former to the latter, as when our Lord healed on the Sabbath day, - and justified his disciples for plucking the cars of corn when they were hungry; yet, in point of fact, the rigid ness which

forbade the doing good on the Sabbath day, in these cases of necessity, we have our Lord's authority to say, was the result of a misinterpretation of the moral precept itself, and no direct infringement of it was implied in either case. Should an actual impossibility occur of observing two precepts, one a moral and the other a positive one, it can be but a rare case, and our conduct must certainly be regulated, not on our own views merely, but on such general principles as our now perfect revelation

furnishes us with, and it is at our risk that we misapply them. In the case of our first parent? the positive command neither did, nor, apparently in their circumstances, could stand in opposition to any moral injunction contained in that universal law under which they were placed. It harmonized perfectly with its two great principles, love to God and love to our neighbor, for both would be violated by disobedience;- one, by rebellion against the Creator; the other, by disregard of each other's

welfare, and that of their posterity.

Nor, indeed, was this positive injunction without some obvious moral reason, the case with probably all positive precepts of Divine authority, when carefully considered. The ordinances of public worship, baptism in the name of Christ, the celebration of the Lord's Supper, and the observance of the Sabbath, have numerous and very plain reasons both of subjection, recognition, and gratitude; and so had the prohibition

of the fruit of one of the trees of the garden. The moral precepts of the Decalogue would, for the most part, have been inappropriate to the peculiar condition of the first pair;- such as the prohibitions of polytheism; of the use of idolatrous images; of taking the name of God in vain; of theft and adultery; of murder and covetousness. Thus even if objectors were left at liberty to attempt to point out a better test of obedience than that which was actually appointed, they would find, as in most

such cases, how much easier it is to object than to suggest. The law was, in the first place, simple and explicit; it was not dim", cult of observation; and it accorded with the circumstances of those on whom it was enjoined. They were placed amidst abundance of pleasant and exhilarating fruits, and of those one kind only was reserved. This reservation implied also great principles. It may be turned into ridicule:- so, by an ignorant person, might the reserve in our customs of a pepper corn, or other

quit rent, which yet are acknowledgments of subjection and sovereignty. This is given as an illustration, not, indeed, as a parallel; for there is a very natural view of this transaction in paradise, which gives to it an aspect so noble and dignified, that we may well shudder at the impiety of that poor wit by which it has been sometimes ignorantly assailed. The dominion of this lower world had been given to man, but it is equally required by the Divine glory, and by the benefit of creatures

themselves, that all should acknowledge their subjection to him. Man was required to do this, as it were, openly, and in the presence of the whole creation, by a public token, and to give proof of it by a continued abstinence from the prohibited fruit. He was required to do it also in a way suitable to his excellent nature and to his character as lord of all other creatures, by a free and voluntary obedience, thus acknowledging the common Creator to be his supreme Lord, and himself to be dependent upon his

bounty and favor. In this view we can conceive nothing more fitting, as a test of obedience, and nothing more important than the moral lesson continually taught by the obligation thus openly and publicly to acknowledge the rights and authority of him who was, naturally, the Lord of all. (7) (7) "Legem tamen hanc idcirco homini latam fuisse arbitramur, ut ei obsequendo et obtemperando, palam publiceque veluti testaretur, se, cui domiuium rerum omnium creatarum a Deo delatum

erat, Deo tamen ipsi subjectum obnoxiumque esse; utquo obsequio eodem suo tanquam vasallus et cliens, publico aliquo recognitionis symbolo, profiteretur, se in omnibus Deo suo, tanquam supremo Domino, obtemperare et parere velle; id quod aequissimum erat."

(Episcopius.)

The immediate, visible agent in the seduction of man to sin was the serpent; but the whole testimony of Scripture is in proof that the real tempter was that

subtle and powerful evil spirit, whose general appellatives are the devil and satan. (8) This shows that ridicule, as to the serpent, is quite misplaced, and that one of the most serious doctrines is involved in the whole account, -

the doctrine of diabolical influence. We have already observed, that we have no means of ascertaining the pristine form and qualities of this animal, except that it was distinguished from all the beasts of the field, which the Lord God had

made, by his "subtlety" or intelligence, for the word does not necessarily imply a bad sense; and we might, indeed, be content to give credit to Satan for a wily choice of the most fitting instrument for his purpose. These are questions which, however, sink into nothing before the important doctrine of the liability of man, both in his primitive and in his fallen state, to temptations marshaled and directed by a superior, malignant intelligence. Of this, the fact cannot be doubted, if we admit the Scriptures to be interpreted

by any rules which will admit them to be written for explicit instruction and the use of popular readers; and, although we have but general intimations of the existence of an order of apostate spirits, and know nothing of the date of their creation, or the circumstances of their probation and fall; yet this is clear, that they are permitted, for their "time," to have influence on earth; to war against the virtue and the peace of man, though under constant control and government; and that this entered into

the circumstances of the trial of our first parents, and that it enters into ours. In this part of the history of the fall, therefore, without giving up any portion of the literal sense, we must, on the authority of other passages of Scripture, look beyond the letter, and regard the serpent but as the instrument of a super-human tempter, who then commenced his first act of warfare against the rule of God in this lower world; and began a contest, which, for purposes of wisdom, to be hereafter more fully disclosed, he has been

allowed to canny on for ages, and will still be permitted to maintain till the result shall make his fall more marked, and bring into view moral truths and principles in which the whole universe of innocent or redeemed creatures arc, probably, to be instructed to their eternal advantage.

(8) The former word signifies a traducer and false accuser, the latter an adversary.

In like manner, the malediction pronounced upon the serpent, while it

is to be understood literally as to that animal, must be considered as teaching more than the letter simply expresses; and the terms of it are, therefore, for the reason given above, (the comment found in other parts of Scripture,) to be regarded as symbolical. "As the literal sense does not exclude the mystical, the cursing of the serpent is a symbol to us, and a visible pledge of the malediction with which the devil is struck by God, and whereby he is become the most abominable and miserable of all creatures.

But man, by the help of the seed of the woman, that is, by our Savior, shall bruise his head, wound him in the place that is most mortal, and destroy him with eternal ruin. In the meantime, the enmity and abhorrence we have of the serpent is a continual warning to us of the danger we are in of the devil, and how heartily we ought to abhor him and all his works."

(Archbishop King.) To this view, indeed, strenuous objections have been made; and in order to get quit of

the doctrine of so early and significant a promise of a Redeemer, - a promise so expressed as necessarily to imply redemption through the temporary suffering of the Redeemer, the bruising of his heel, - many of those who are willing to give up the latter entirely, in other parts of the narrative, and to resolve the whole into fable, resist this addition of the parabolic meaning to the literal, and contend for that alone. In answer to this, we may observe, -

1, That, on the merely literal interpretation of

these words, the main instrument of the transgression would remain unsentenced and unpunished. That instrument was the devil, as already shown, and who, in evident allusion to this circumstance, is called in Scripture, "a murderer from the beginning," "a liar and the father of lies;" "that old serpent, called the devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world;" he "who sinneth from the beginning;" so that whosoever "committeth sin is of the devil," and consequently our first

parents. It is also in plain allusion to this history and the bruising of the head of the serpent that the apostle takes the phrase of "bruising" Satan under the feet of believers. These passages can only be disposed of by resolving the whole account of diabolical agency in Scripture into figures of speech; (the theory adopted by Socinians, and which will be subsequently refuted;) but if the agency of Satan be allowed in this transaction, then to confine ourselves to the merely literal sense leaves the

prime mover of the offence without any share of the malediction; and the curse of the serpent must, therefore, in justice, be concluded to fall with the least weight upon the animal instrument, the serpent itself, and with its highest emphasis upon the intelligent and accountable seducer.

2. We are compelled to this interpretation by the reason of the case. That a higher power was identified with the serpent in the transaction is apparent, from the

intelligent and rational powers ascribed to the serpent, which it is utterly inconsistent with the distinction between man and the inferior animals to attribute to a mere brute. He was the most "subtle" of the beasts, made such near approaches to rationality as to be a fit instrument by which to deceive; but, assuredly, the use of speech, of reasoning powers, a knowledge of the Divine law, and the power of seductive artifice to entrap human beings in their state of perfection into sin against God, are

not the faculties of an irrational animal. The solemn manner, too, in which the Almighty addresses the serpent in pronouncing the curse, shows that an intelligent and free agent was arraigned before him, and it would, indeed, be ridiculous to suppose to the contrary.

3. The circumstances of our first parents also confirm the symbolical interpretation, in conjunction with the literal one. This is shown by

Bishop Sherlock with much acuteness:-

"They were now in a state of sin, standing before God to receive sentence for their disobedience, and had reason to expect a full execution of the penalty threatened. In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die. But God came in mercy as well as judgment, purposing not only to punish, but to restore man. The judgment is awful and severe: the woman is doomed to sorrow in conception; the man to sorrow and travail all the

days of his life; the ground is cursed for his sake; and the end of the judgment is, dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return, Had they been left thus, they might have continued he their labor and sorrow for their appointed time, and at last have returned to dust, without any well-grounded hope or confidence in God: they must have looked upon themselves as rejected by their Maker, delivered up to trouble and sorrow in this world, and as having no hope in any other. Upon this ground I conceive

there could have been no religion left in the world; for a sense of religion without hope is a state of frenzy and distraction, void of all inducements to love and obedience, or anything else that is praiseworthy. If, therefore God intended to preserve them as objects of mercy, it was absolutely necessary to communicate so much hope to them, as might be a rational foundation for their future endeavors to be reconciled to him. This seems to be the primary intention of this first Divine prophecy; and it was necessary to the

state of the world, and the condition of religion, which could not possibly have been supported without the communication of such hopes. The prophecy is excellently adapted to this purpose, and manifestly conveyed such hopes to our first parents. For let us consider in what sense we may suppose them to understand the prophecy. Now they must necessarily understand the prophecy, either according to the literal meaning of the words, or according to such meaning as the whole circumstance of the

transaction, of which they are part, does require. If we suppose them to understand the words literally only, and that God meant them to be so understood, this passage must appear ridiculous. Do but imagine that you see God coming to judge the offenders; Adam and Eve before him in the utmost distress; that you hear God inflicting pains, and sorrows, and misery, and death, upon the first of human race; and that in the midst of all this scene of woe and great calamity, you hear him foretelling,

with great solemnity, a very trivial accident that should sometimes happen in the world: that serpents would be apt to bite men by the heels, and that men would be apt to revenge themselves by striking them on the head. What has this trifle to do with the loss of mankind, with the corruption of the natural and moral world, and the ruin of all the glory and happiness of the creation? Great comfort it was to Adam, doubtless, after telling him that his days would be short and full of misery, and his end

without hope, to let him know that he should now and then knock a snake on the head, but not even that, without paying dear for his poor victory, for the snake should often bite him by the heel. Adam surely could not understand the prophecy in this sense, though some of his sons have so understood it. Leaving this, therefore, as absolutely absurd and ridiculous, let us consider what meaning the circumstances of the transaction do necessarily fix to the words of this prophecy. Adam tempted

by his wife, and she by the serpent, had fallen from their obedience, and were now in the presence of God expecting judgment. They knew full well at this juncture, that their fall was the victory of the serpent, whom by experience they found to be an enemy to God and to man; to man, whom he had ruined by seducing him to sin; to God, the noblest work of whose creation he had defaced. It could not, therefore, but be some comfort to them to hear the serpent first condemned, and to see that, however he

had prevailed against them, he had gained no victory over their Maker, who was able to assert his own honor, and to punish this great author of iniquity. By this method of God's proceeding they were secured from thinking that there was any evil being equal to the Creator in power and dominion: an opinion which gained ground in after limes through the prevalence of evil, and is, where it does prevail, destructive of all true religion. The belief of God's supreme dominion, which is the foundation of

all religion, being thus preserved, it was still necessary to give them such hopes as they could not but conceive, when they heard from the mouth of God, that the serpent's victory was not a complete victory, over even themselves; that they and their posterity should be enabled to contest his empire; and though they were to suffer much in the struggle, yet finally they should prevail and bruise the serpent's head, and be delivered from his power and dominion over them.

What now could they conceive this conquest over the serpent to mean? Is it not natural to expect that we shall recover that by victory which we lost by being defeated? They knew that the enemy had subdued them by sin, could they then conceive hopes of victory otherwise than by righteousness? They lost through sin the happiness of their creation, could they expect less from the return of righteousness than the recovery of the blessings forfeited? What else but this could they expect? For the certain knowledge they

had of their loss when the serpent prevailed, could not but lead them to a clear knowledge of what they should regain by prevailing against the serpent. The language of this prophecy is indeed in part metaphorical, but it is a great mistake to think that all metaphors are of uncertain signification; for the design and scope of the speaker, with the circumstances attending, create a final and determinate sense."

The import of this prediction appears, from

various allusions of Scripture, to have been, that the Messiah, who was, in an eminent and peculiar sense, the seed of the woman, should, though himself bruised in the conflict, obtain a complete victory over the malice and power of Satan, and so restore those benefits to man which by sin he had lost. From this time hope looked forward to the great restorer, and sacrifices, which are no otherwise to be accounted for, began to be offered, in pre-figuration of the fact and efficacy of his sufferings.

From that first promise, that light of salvation broke forth, which, by the increased illumination of revelation, through following ages, shone brighter and brighter to the perfect day. To what extent our first parents understood this promise it is not possible for us to say. Sufficiently, there is no doubt, for hope and faith; and that it might be the ground of a new dispensation of religion, in which salvation was to be of grace, not of works, and in which prayer was to be offered for all necessary

blessings, on the ground of pure mercy, and through the intercession of an infinitely worthy Mediator. The Scriptures cannot be explained, unless this be admitted, for these are the very principles which are assumed in God's government of man from the period of his fall; and it is, there-fore, probable, that in those earliest patriarchal ages, of which we have so brief and rapid an account in the writings of Moses, and which we may, nevertheless, collect, were ages distinguished by the frequent and visible

intercourse of God and superior beings with men, there were revelations made and instructions given which are not specifically recorded, but which formed that body of theology which is, unquestionably, presupposed by the whole Mosaic institute. But if we allow that this first promise, as interpreted by us, contains more than our first parents can be supposed to have discovered in it, we may say, with the prelate just quoted,

"Since this prophecy has been plainly fulfilled in Christ, and by the event appropriated to him only, I would fain know how it comes to be conceived to be so ridiculous a thing in us to suppose that God, to whom the whole event was known from the beginning, should make choice of such expressions as naturally conveyed so much knowledge to our first parents as he intended, and yet should appear, in the fullness of time, to have been peculiarly adapted to the event which he, from the beginning, saw, and

which he intended the world should one day see, and which, when they should see, they might the more easily acknowledge to be the work of his hand, by the secret evidence which he had enclosed from the days of old in the words of prophecy."

From these remarks on the history of the fall, we are called to consider the state into which that event reduced the first man and his posterity.

As to Adam, it is clear that he became liable to inevitable death, and that,

during his temporary life, he was doomed to severe labor, ex-pressed in Scripture by eating his bread in, or "by the sweat of his brow." These are incontrovertible points; but that the threatening of death, as the penalty of disobedience, included spiritual and eternal death, as to himself and his posterity, has been, and continues to be, largely and resolutely debated, and will require our consideration.

On this subject the following are the leading opinions:-

The view stated by Pelagius, who lived in the fifth century, is (if he has not been misrepresented) that which is held by the modern Socinians. It is, that though Adam, by his transgression, exposed himself to the displeasure of his Maker, yet that neither were the powers of his own nature at all impaired, nor have his posterity, in any sense, sustained the smallest hurt by his disobedience; that he was created mortal, and would, therefore, have died, had he not sinned; and that the only evil he

suffered was his being expelled from paradise, and subjected to the discipline of labor. That his posterity, like himself, are placed in a state of trial; that death to them, as to him, is a natural event; and that the prospect of certain dissolution, joined to the common calamities of life, is favorable to the cultivation of virtue. By a proper attention we may maintain our innocence amidst surrounding temptations, and may also daily improve in moral excellence, by the proper

use of reason and other natural powers.

A second opinion has been attributed to the followers of Arminius, on which a remark shall just now be offered. It has been thus epitomized by Dr. Hill:-

"According to this opinion, although the first man had a body naturally frail and mortal, his life would have been for ever preserved by the bounty of his Creator, had he continued obedient; and the instrument employed by God, to preserve his mortal body

from decay, was the fruit of life.

Death was declared to be the penalty of transgression; and, therefore, as soon as he transgressed, he was removed at a distance from the tree of life; and his posterity, inheriting his natural mortality, and not having access to the tree of life, are subjected to death. It is therefore said by St. Paul,' By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men. In Adam all die. By one man's

offence death reigned by one.' These expressions clearly point out death to be the consequence of Adam's transgression, an evil brought upon his posterity by his fault; and this the Arminians understand to be the whole meaning of its being said, 'Adam begat a son in his own likeness, after his image,' Gen. 5:3, and of Paul saying, 'We have borne the image of the earthly.'

"It is admitted, however, by those who hold the opinion, that this change

upon the condition of mankind, from a life preserved without end, to mortality, was most unfavorable to their moral character. The fear of death enfeebles and enslaves the mind; the pursuit of those things which are necessary to support a frail perishing life, engrosses and contracts the soul; and the desires of sensual pleasure are rendered more eager and ungovernable, by the knowledge that the time of enjoying them soon passes away. Hence arise envying of those who have a larger share of the good things of

this life-strife with those who interfere in our enjoyments-impatience under restraint-and sorrow and repining when pleasure is abridged. And to this variety of turbulent passions, the natural fruits of the punishment of Adam's transgression, there are also to be added, all the fretfulness and disquietude occasioned by the diseases and pains which are inseparable from the condition of a mortal being. In this way the Arminians explain such expressions as these, 'by one man's disobedience

many were made sinners;' 'all are under sin;' ' behold I was shapen in iniquity,' i.e. all men, in consequence of Adam's sin, are born in these circumstances, -

under that disposition of events which subjects them to the dominion of passion, and exposes them to so many temptations, that it is impossible for any man to maintain his integrity. And hence, they say, arises the necessity of a Savior, who, restoring to man the immortality which he had forfeited, may be said to have abolished death; who

effectually delivers his followers from that bondage of mind, and that corruption of character, which are connected with the fear of death; who, by his perfect obedience, obtains pardon for those sins into which they have been betrayed by their condition, and by his Spirit enables them to overcome the temptations which human nature of itself cannot withstand.

"According to tin's opinion, then, the human race has suffered universally in a very high degree by the sin

of their first parent. At the same time, the manner of their suffering is analogous to many circumstances in the ordinary dispensations of Providence; for we often see children, by the negligence or fault of their parents, placed in situations very unfavorable both to their prosperity and to their improvement; and we can trace the profligacy of their character to the defects of their education, to the example set before them in their youth, and to the multiplied temptations in which, from a want of due attention on the part of

others, they find themselves early entangled." (Lectures.)

That this is a very defective view of the effects of the original offence upon Adam and his descendants must be acknowledged. Whether Adam, as to his body, became mortal by positive infliction, or by being excluded from the means of warding off disease and mortality, which were provided in the tree of life, is a speculative point, which has no important theological bearing; but that the

corruption of our nature, and not merely its greater liability to be corrupted, is the doctrine of Scripture, will presently be shown. This [semi-Pelagian sentiment] was not the opinion of Arminius, nor of his immediate followers. Nor is it the opinion of that large body of Christians, often called Arminians, who follow the theological opinions of Mr. Wesley. It was the opinion of Dr. Whitby and several divines of the English Church, who, though called Arminians, were semi-Pelagians, or at least made

great approaches to that error; and the writer just quoted has no authority for giving this as the Arminian opinion, except the work of Whitby's entitled, Tractates de Imputatione Peccati Adami. In this, however, he has followed others, who, on Whitby's authority, attribute this notion nut only to Arminius singly, but to the body of the remonstrants, and to all those who, to this day, advocate the doctrine of general redemption. This is one proof how little pains many divines of the Calvinistic school have

taken to understand the opinions they have hastily condemned in mass.

The following passages from the writings of Arminius will do justice to the character of that eminent divine on this important subject.

In the 15th and 16th propositions of his 7th public lecture on the first sin of the first man, he says, -

"The immediate and proper effect of this sin was, that God was offended by it. For since the form of sin is the

transgression of the law, 1 John 3:4, such transgression primarily and immediately impinges against the Legislator himself. Gen. 3:2; and it impinges against him, Gen.

3:16, 19, 23, 24, with offence, it having been his will that his law should not be infringed, Gen.

3:17: from which he conceives a just wrath, which is the second effect of sin. But this wrath is followed by the infliction of punishment, which here is twofold:1. A liability to both deaths, Rom. 6:23. 2.

A privation of that primeval holiness and righteousness, Luke 19:26, which, because they were the effects of the Holy Spirit dwelling in man, ought not to remain in man who had fallen from the favor of God? and had incurred his anger. For that Spirit is a seal and token of the Divine favor and benevolence, Rom. 8:14, 15; 1 Cor. 2:12.

"But the whole of this sin is not peculiar to our first parents, but is common to the whole race, and to all their posterity, who, at the

time when the first sin was committed, were in their loins, and who after, ward descended from them in the natural mode of propagation, according to the primitive benediction. For, in Adam all have sinned, Rom. 5:12. Whatever punishment, therefore, was inflicted on our first parents, has also pervaded all their posterity, and still oppresses them: so that all are by nature children of wrath, Eph. 2:31, obnoxious to condemnation and to death, temporal and

eternal, Rom. 5:12, and are, lastly, devoid of that

[primeval] righteousness and holiness: with which evils they would continue oppressed forever, unless they were delivered from them by Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever!

Rom. 5:18, 19."

In the epistle which Arminius addressed to Hippolytus, describing grace and free will, his views on this subject are still more clearly expressed:-

"It is impossible for free will without grace to begin or perfect any true or spiritual good. I say, the grace of Christ, which pertains to regeneration, is simply and absolutely necessary for the illumination of the mind, the ordering of the affections, and the inclination of the will to that which is good. It is that which operates on the mind, the affections, and the will; which infuses good thoughts into the mind, inspires good desires into the affections, and leads the will to execute

good thoughts and good desires. It prevents, (goes before,) accompanies, and follows. It excites, assists, works in us to will, and works with us, that we may not will in vain. It averts temptations, stands by and aids us in temptations, supports us against the flesh, the world, and Satan; and, in the conflict, it grants us to enjoy the victory. It raises up again those who are conquered and fallen, it establishes them, and endues them with new strength, and renders them more cautious. It begins,

promotes, perfects, and consummates salvation. I confess, that the mind of the natural (animalis) and carnal man is darkened, his affections are depraved and disordered, his will is refractory, and that the man is dead in sins."

And, in his 11th Public Disputation on the Freewill of Man, and its powers, he says, "that the will of man, with respect to true good, is not only wounded, bruised, inferior, crooked, and attenuated; but it is likewise captivated, destroyed, and lost; and

has no powers whatever except such as are excited by grace."

The doctrine of the remonstrants is, "That God, to the glory of his abundant goodness, having decreed to make man after his own image, and to give him an easy and most equal law, and add thereunto a threatening of death to the transgressors thereof, and foreseeing that Adam would willfully transgress the same, and thereby make himself and his posterity liable to condemnation; though God

was, notwithstanding, mercifully affected toward man, yet, out of respect to his justice and truth, he would not give way to his mercy to save man till his justice should be satisfied, and his serious hatred of sin and love of righteousness should be made known." The condemnation here spoken of, as affecting Adam and his posterity, is to be understood of more than the death of the body, as being opposed to the salvation procured by the sacrifice of Christ; and, with respect to the moral

state of human nature since the fall, the third of their articles, exhibited, at the synod of Dort, states, that the remonstrants "hold that a man hath not saving faith of himself, nor from the power of his own free will, seeing that, while he is in the state of sin, he cannot of himself, nor by himself, think, will, or do any saving good." (9) (9) See tenets of the remonstrants, in Nichol's "Calvinism and Arminianism The doctrine of the Church of England, though often claimed as exclusively Calvinistic on

this point, accords perfectly with true Arminianism. "Original sin standeth not in the following or imitation of Adam, as the Pelagians do vainly talk; but it is the fault or corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature only inclined to evil," &c. Some of the divines of this Church have, on the other hand, endeavored to soften this article, by availing themselves of the phrase

"very far gone," as though it did not express a total defection from original righteousness. The articles were, however, subscribed by the two houses of convocation, in 1571, in Latin and English also, and therefore both copies are equally authentic, The Latin copy expresses this phrase by "quam longissime distet;" which is as strong an expression as that language can furnish, fixes the sense of the compilers on this point, and takes away the argument which rests on the alleged equivocalness

of the English version. Nor does there appear any material discrepancy between this statement of the fallen condition of man and the Augsburgh Confession, the doc trine of the French Churches, that of the Calvinistic Church of Scotland, and, so far as the moral state of man only is concerned, the views of Calvin himself. There are, it is true, such expressions as "contagion," "infection," and the like, in some of these formularies, which are somewhat equivocal, as bearing upon a point from which some divines, both

Arminians and Calvinists, have dissented, - the direct corruption of human nature by a sort of judicial act; but, this point excepted, to which we shall subsequently turn our attention, the true Arminian, as fully as the Calvinist, admits the doctrine of the total depravity of human nature in consequence of the fall of our first parents; and is indeed enabled to carry it through his system with greater consistency than the Calvinist himself. For, while the latter is obliged, in order to account for

certain good dispositions and occasional religious inclinations in those who never give any evidence of their actual conversion to God, to refer them to nature, and not to grace, which, according to them, is not given to the reprobate, the believer in general redemption maintains the total incapacity of unassisted nature to produce such effects, and attributes them to that Divine gracious influence which, if not resisted, would lead on to conversion. Some of the doctrines joined by

Calvinists with the corruption of our common nature are, indeed, very disputable, and such as we shall, in the proper place, attempt to prove unscriptural; but in this Arminians and they so well agree, that it is an entire delusion to represent this doctrine, as it is often done, as exclusively Calvinistic. "The Calvinists," says Bishop Tomline, "contend that the sin of Adam introduced into his nature such a radical impotence and depravity, that it is impossible for his descendants to make any

voluntary effort [of themselves] toward piety and virtue, or in any respect to correct and improve their moral and religious character; and that faith and all the Christian graces are communicated by the sole and irresistible operation of the Spirit of God, without any endeavor or concurrence on the part of man." (Refutation of Calvinism,) The latter part only of this statement gives the Calvinistic peculiarity; the former is not exclusively theirs.

We have seen the sentiment of Arminius on the natural state of man, and it perfectly harmonizes with that of Calvin where he says, in his own forcible manner," that man is so totally overwhelmed, as with a deluge, that no part is free from sin, and therefore whatever proceeds from him is accounted sin." (Institutes.)

But in bringing all these opinions to the test of Scriptural testimony, we must first inquire into the import of the penalty of

death, threatened upon the offences of the first man.

The Pelagian and Socinian notion, that Adam would have died had he not sinned, requires no other refutation than the words of the Apostle Paul, who declares expressly that death entered the world "by sin," and so it inevitably follows that, as to man at least, but for sin there would have been no death.

The notion of others, that the death threatened extended to the annihilation of the soul as

well as the body, and was only arrested by the interposition of a Redeemer, assumes a doctrine which has no countenance at all in Scripture, namely, that the penalty of transgressing the Divine law?

when it extends to the soul, is death in the sense of annihilation. On the contrary, whenever the threat of death, in Scripture, refers to the soul, it unquestionably means future and conscious punishment. Beside, the term "death,"

which conveys the threatening, does not properly express annihilation. There is no adequate opposition between life and annihilation. If there were such an opposition between them, then life and non-annihilation must be equivalent terms. But they are not; for many things exist which do not live; and thus both the sense attached to the term death, in Scripture, when applied to the soul, as well as the proper sense of that term itself, and the reason

of the thing, forbid that interpretation.

The death threatened to Adam, we conclude, therefore, to have extended to the soul of man as well as to his body, though not in the sense of annihilation; but, for the confirmation of this, it is necessary to refer more particularly to the language of Scripture, which is its own best interpreter, and it will be seen, that the opinion of those divines who include in the penalty attached to the first offence, the very "fullness

of death," as it has been justly termed, death bodily, spiritual, and eternal, is not to be puffed away by sarcasm, but stands firm on inspired testimony.

Beside death, as it is opposed to animal life, and which consists in the separation of the rational soul from the body, the Scriptures speak of the life and death of the soul in a moral sense. The first consists in the union of the soul to God, and is manifested by those vigorous, grateful, and holy affections, which are, by

this union, produced. The second consists in a separation of the soul from communion with God, and is manifested by the dominion of earthly and corrupt dispositions and habits, and an entire indifference or aversion to spiritual and heavenly things.

This, too, is represented as the state of all who are not quickened by the instrumentality of the Gospel, employed for this purpose by the power and agency of its Divine Author. "And you hath he

quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins." The state of a regenerate mind is, in accordance with this view, represented as a resurrection, and a passing "from death unto life;"

and both to Christ and to the Holy Spirit is this work of quickening the souls of men and preserving them in moral or spiritual life attributed. To interpret, then, the death pronounced upon Adam as including moral death, seeing that he, by his transgression, fell actually into the same moral state

as a sinner against God, in which all those persons now are who are dead in trespasses and sins, is in entire accordance with the language of Scripture. For, if a state of sin in them is a state of spiritual death, then a state of sin in him was a state of spiritual death; and that both by natural consequence, the same cause producing the same effect, and also by the appointment of God, who departs from sinful men, and, withdrawing himself from all communion with the guilty, withdraws

thereby the only source of moral or spiritual life.

But the highest sense of the term "death," in Scripture, is the punishment of the soul in a future state, both by a loss of happiness and separation from God, and also by a positive infliction of Divine wrath. Now this is stated, not as peculiar to any dispensation of religion, but as common to all; as the penalty of the transgression of the law of God in every degree. "Sin is the transgression of the law," this is its definition;

"the wages of sin is death," this is its penalty.

Here we have no mention made of any particular sin, as rendering the transgressor liable to this penalty, nor of any particular circumstance under which sin may be committed, as calling forth that fatal expression of the Divine displeasure; but of sin itself generally:- of transgression of the Divine law, in every form and degree, it is affirmed, "the wages of sin is death." This is, therefore, to be considered as an axiom in

the jurisprudence of Heaven. "Sin," says St. James, with like absolute and unqualified manner, "when it is finished, bringeth forth DEATH;" nor have we the least intimation given in Scripture, that any sin whatever is exempted from this penalty; that some sins are punished in this life only, and others in the life to come. The degree of punishment will be varied by the offence; but death is the penalty attached to all sin, unless it is averted by pardon, which itself supposes that in law the

penalty has been incurred. What was there, then, in the case of Adam to take him out of this rule? His act was a transgression of the law, and therefore sin; as sin, its wages, was "death," which, in Scripture, we have seen, means, in its highest sense, future punishment.

To this Dr. Taylor, whom most modern writers who deny the doctrine of original sin have followed, objects: "Death was to be the consequence of his disobedience, and the death here threatened can

be opposed only to that life God gave Adam when he created him."

To this it has been replied:-

"True: but how are you assured, that God, when he created him, did not give him spiritual, as well as animal, life? Now spiritual death is opposed to spiritual life. And this is more than the death of the body.

"But this, you say, is pure conjecture, without a solid foundation. For no other life is spoken of before. Yes there is. The image of God

is spoken of before. This is not therefore pure conjecture; but is grounded upon a solid foundation, upon the plain word of God. Allowing then that 'Adam could understand it of no other life than that which he had newly received;' yet would he naturally understand it of the life of God in his soul, as well as of the life of his body. In this light therefore the sense of the threatening will stand thus; 'Thou shalt surely die;' as if he had said, I have formed thee of the dust of the ground, and'

breathed into thy nostrils the breath of lives,'

both of animal and spiritual life; and in both respects thou art become a living soul. 'But if thou eatest of the forbidden tree, thou shalt cease to be a living soul. For I will take from thee' the lives I have given, and thou shalt die spiritually, temporally, eternally." (Wesley on Original Sin.)

The answer of President Edwards is more at large.

"To this I would say; it is true, death is opposed to

life, and must be understood according to the nature of that life, to which it is opposed. But does it therefore follow, that nothing can be meant by it but the loss of life? Misery is opposed to happiness, and sorrow is in Scripture often opposed to joy; but can we conclude from thence, that nothing is meant in Scripture by sorrow, but the loss of joy? Or that there is no more in misery, than the loss or absence of happiness?

And if the death threatened to Adam can, with

certainty, be opposed only to the life given to Adam, when God created him; I think a state of perfect, perpetual, and hopeless misery is properly opposed to that state Adam was in when God created him. For I suppose it will not be denied, that the life Adam had, was truly a happy life; happy in perfect innocence, in the favor of his Maker, surrounded with the happy fruits and testimonies of his love. And I think it has been proved, that he also was happy in a state of perfect righteousness. Nothing is more manifest

than that it is agreeable to a very common acceptation of the word life in Scripture, that it be understood as signifying a state of excellent and happy existence. Now that which is most opposite to that life and state in which Adam was created, is a state of total, confirmed wickedness, and perfect hopeless misery, under the Divine displeasure and curse; not excluding temporal death, or the destruction' of the body, as an introduction to it.

"Beside, that which is much more evident than anything Dr. T. says on this head, is, that the death which was to come on Adam, as the punishment of his disobedience, was opposed to that life, which he would have had as the reward of his obedience in case he had not sinned.

Obedience and disobedience are contraries; the threatenings and promises which are sanctions of a law, are set in direct opposition; and the promises, rewards, and

threatened punishments, are most properly taken as each other's opposites. But none will deny, that the life which would have been Adam's reward, if he had persisted in obedience, was eternal life. And therefore we argue justly that the death which stands opposed to that life, (Dr. T. himself being judge,) is manifestly eternal death, a death widely different from the death we now die-to use his own words. If Adam for his persevering obedience, was to have had everlasting life and happiness, in perfect

holiness, union with his Maker, and enjoyment of his favor, and this was the life which was to be confirmed by the tree of life; then, doubtless, the death threatened in case of disobedience, which stands in direct opposition to this, was an exposure to everlasting wickedness and misery, in separation from God, and in enduring his wrath." (Original Sin.)

The next question is, whether Adam is to be considered as a mere individual, the consequences of whose

misconduct terminated in himself, or no otherwise affected his posterity than incidentally, as the misconduct of an ordinary parent may affect the circumstances of his children; or whether he is to be regarded as a public man, the head and representative of the human race, who, in consequence of his fall, have fallen with him, and received direct hurt and injury in the very constitution of their bodies, and the moral state of their minds.

The testimony of Scripture is so explicit on this point, that all the attempts to evade it have been in vain. In Romans 5, Adam and Christ are contrasted in their public or federal character, and the hurt which mankind have derived from the one, and the healing they have received from the other, are also contrasted in various particulars, which are equally represented as the effects of the "offence" of Adam, and of the "obedience" of Christ, Adam, indeed, in verse 14, is called, with evident

allusion to this public representative character, the figure, (tupos,) type, or model

"of him that was to come." The same apostle also adopts the phrases, "the first Adam," and "the second Adam," which mode of speaking can only be explained on the ground, that as sin and death descended from one, so righteousness and life flow from the other; and that what Christ is to all his spiritual seed, that Adam is to all his natural descendants. On this,

indeed, the parallel is founded, 1 Cor. 15:22, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive," words which on any other hypothesis can have no natural signification. Nor is there any weight in the observation, that this relation of Adam to his descendants is not expressly stated in the history of the fall; since, if it were not indicated in that account, the comment of an inspired apostle is, doubtless, a sufficient authority. But the fact is, that the threatenings pronounced upon the first

pair have all respect to their posterity as well as to themselves. The death threatened affects all -

"In Adam all die," "death entered by sin," that is, by his sin, and then "passed upon all men." The painful childbearing threatened upon Eve has passed on to her daughters. The ground was cursed, but that affected Adam's posterity also, who, to this hour, are doomed to eat their bread by "the sweat of their brow." Even the first blessing, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the

earth, and subdue it," was clearly pronounced upon them as public persons, and both by its very terms and the nature of the thing, since they alone could neither replenish the earth nor subject it to their use and dominion, comprehended their posterity. In all these cases they are addressed in such a form of speech as is appropriated to individuals; but the circumstances of the case infallibly show, that, in the whole transaction, they stood before their Maker as public persons, and as the

legal representatives of their descendants, though in so many words they are not invested with these titles.

The condition in which this federal connection between Adam and his descendants placed the latter, remains to be exhibited. The imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity has been a point greatly debated. In the language of theologians it is considered as mediate or immediate, Our mortality of body and the corruption of our moral nature, in virtue of our

derivation from him, is what is meant by the mediate imputation of his sin to us; by immediate imputation is meant that Adam's sin is accounted ours in the sight of God, by virtue of our federal relation. To support the latter notion, various illustrative phrases have been used; as, that Adam and his posterity constitute one moral person, and that the whole human race was in him, its head, consenting to his act, &c. This is so little agreeable to that distinct agency which enters into the very notion

of an accountable being, that it cannot be maintained, and it destroys the sound distinction between original and actual sin. It asserts, indeed, the imputation of the actual commission of Adam's sin to his descendants, which is false in fact; makes us stand chargeable with the full latitude of his transgression, and all its attendant circumstances; and constitutes us, separate from all actual voluntary offence, equally guilty with him, all which are repugnant equally to

our consciousness and to the equity of the case.

The other opinion does not, however, appear to go the length of Scripture, which must not be warped by the reasonings of erring man. There is-another view of the imputation of the offence of Adam to us which is more consistent with its testimony. This is very clearly stated by Dr.

Watts in his answer to Dr. Taylor.

"When a man has broken the law of his country, and is punished for so doing, it

is plain that sin is imputed to him: his wickedness is upon him; he bears his iniquity; that is, he is reputed or accounted guilty: he is condemned and dealt with as an offender.

"But if a man, having committed treason, his estate is taken from him and his children, then they bear the iniquity of their father, and his sin is imputed to them also.

"If a man lose his life and estate for murder, and his children thereby become vagabonds, then the blood

of the person murdered is said to be upon the murderer and upon his children also. So the Jews: His blood be on us and on our children; let us and our children be punished for it.

"But it may be asked, How can the acts of the parent's treason be imputed to his little child?

Since those acts were quite out of the reach of an infant, nor was it possible for him to commit them? -I answer,

"Those acts of treason or acts of service are, by a

common figure, said to be imputed to the children, when they suffer or enjoy the consequences of their father's treason or eminent service: though the particular actions of treason or service, could not be practiced by the children. This would easily be understood should it occur in human history. And why not when it occurs in the sacred writings?

"Sin is taken either for an act of disobedience to a law, or for the legal result of such an act; that is, the

guilt, or liableness to punishment. Now when we say, the sin of a traitor is imputed to his children, we do not mean, that the act of the father is charged upon the child; but that the guilt or liableness' to punishment is so transferred to him that he suffers banishment or poverty on account of it.

"Thus the sin of Achan was so imputed to his children, that they were all stoned on account of it, Josh. 7:24. In like manner the covetousness of Gehazi was imputed to his posterity, 2

Kings 5:27; when God by his prophet pronounced, that the leprosy should cleave unto him and to his seed forever.

"The Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament, use the words sin and iniquity, (both in Hebrew and Greek,) to signify not only the criminal actions themselves, but also the result and consequences of those actions, that is, the guilt or liableness to punishment: and sometimes the punishment itself, whether it fall upon

the original criminal, or upon others on his account.

"Indeed, when sin or righteousness is said to be imputed to any man, on account of what himself hath done, the words usually denote both the good or evil actions themselves, and the legal result of them. But when the sin or righteousness of one person is said to be imputed to another, then generally those words mean only the result thereof; that is, a liableness to punishment on the one

hand, and to reward on the other.

"But let us say what we will, in order to confine the sense of the imputation of sin and righteousness to the legal remit, the reward or punishment of good or evil actions; let us ever so explicitly deny the imputation of the actions themselves to others, still Dr. Taylor will level almost all his arguments against the imputation of the actions them, selves, and then triumph in having demolished what we never

built, and in refuting what we never asserted."

In the sense then above given, we may safely contend for the imputation of Adam's sin; and this agrees precisely with the Apostle Paul, who speaks of the imputation of sin to those who "had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression," that is, to all who lived between Adam and Moses, and, consequently, to infants who personally had not offended; and also declares, that, "by one man's disobedience many

were made, constituted, accounted, and dealt with as sinners," and treated as though they themselves had actually sinned: for, that this is his sense, is clear from what follows, "so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous," -

constituted, accounted, and dealt with as such, though not actually righteous, but, in fact, pardoned criminals. The first consequence, then, of this imputation is the death of the body, to which all the descendants of Adam are made liable,

and that on account of the sin of Adam -

"through the offence of one many are dead." But though this is the first, it is far from being the only consequence. For, as throughout the apostle's reasoning in the fifth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, to which reference has been made, "the gift," "the free gift," "the gift by grace,"

mean one and the same thing, even the whole benefit given by the abounding grace of God, through the obedience of

Christ; and as these verses are evidently parallel to 1st Corinthians 15:22, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive," "it follows that dying and being made alive, in the latter passage, do not refer to the body only, but that dying implies all the evils temporal and spiritual which are derived from Adam's sin, and being made alive, all the blessings which are derived from Christ in time and in eternity." (Wesley on Original Sin.) The second consequence is, therefore, death spiritual, that moral

state which arises from the withdrawment of that intercourse of God with the human soul, in consequence of its becoming polluted, and of that influence upon it which is the only source and spring of the right and vigorous direction and employment of its powers in which its rectitude consists; a deprivation, from which a depravation consequently and necessarily follows. This, we have before seen, was included in the original threatening, and if Adam was a public person, a

representative, it has passed on to his descendants, who, in their natural state, are therefore said to be "dead in trespasses and sins." Thus it is that the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; and that all evils naturally "proceed from it," as corrupt streams from a corrupt fountain.

The third consequence is eternal death, separation from God, and endless banishment from his glory in a future state. This follows from both the

above premises, - from the federal character of Adam; and from the eternal life given by Christ being opposed by the apostle to the death derived from Adam. The justice of this is objected to, a point which will be immediately considered; but it is now sufficient to gay, that if the making the descendants of Adam liable to eternal death, because of his offence, be unjust, the infliction of temporal death is so also; the duration of the punishment making no difference in the simple question of justice. If

punishment, whether of loss or of pain, be unjust, its measure and duration maybe a greater or a less injustice; but it is unjust in every degree. If, then, we only confine the hurt we have received from Adam to bodily death; if this legal result of his transgression only be imputed to us, and we are so constituted sinners as to become liable to it, we are in precisely the same difficulty, as to the equity of the proceeding, as when that legal result is extended farther. The only way out of this dilemma is that adopted by Dr. Taylor,

to consider death not as a punishment, but as a blessing, which involves the absurdity of making Deity threaten a benefit as a penalty for an offence, which sufficiently refutes the notion.

The objections which have been raised against the imputation of Adam's offence, in the extent we have stated it, on the ground of the justice of the proceeding, are of two kinds. The former are leveled not against that Scriptural view of the case which has just been

exhibited, but against that repulsive and shocking perversion of it which is found in the high Calvinistic creed, which consigns infants, not elect, to a conscious and endless punishment, and that not of loss only, but of pain, for this first offence of another. The latter springs from regarding the legal part of the whole transaction which affected our first parents and their posterity, separately from the evangelical provision of mercy which was concurrent with it, and which included, in like

manner, both them and their whole race. With the high Calvinistic view we have now nothing to do. It will stand or fall with the doctrines of election and reprobation, as held by that school, and these will be examined in their place. The latter class of objections now claim our attention; and as to them we observe, that, as the question relates to the moral government of God, if one part of the transaction before us is intimately and inseparably connected with another and collateral procedure, it

cannot certainly be viewed in its true light but in that connection. The redemption of man by Christ was not certainly an afterthought brought in upon man's apostasy; it was a provision, and when man fell, he found justice hand in hand with mercy. What are, then, the facts of the whole case? For greater clearness, let us take Adam and the case of his adult descendants first. All become liable to bodily death; here was justice, the end of which is to support law, as that supports government. By means of

the anticipated sacrifice of the Redeemer's atonement, which, as we shall in its place show, is an effectual means of declaring the justice of God, the sentence is reversed, not by exemption from bodily death, but by a happy and glorious resurrection. For, as this was an act of grace, almighty God was free to choose, speaking humanly, the circumstances under which it should be administered, in ordering which the unerring wisdom of God had its natural influence. The evil of sin was still to be kept visible

before the universe, for its admonition, by the actual infliction of death upon all men: the grace was to be manifested in reparation of the loss by restoration to immortality. Again, God, the fountain of spiritual life, forsook the soul of Adam, now polluted by sin, and unfit for his residence. He became morally dead and corrupt, and, as "that which is born of the flesh is flesh,"

this is the natural state of his descendants. Here was justice, a display of the evil of sin, and of the penalty

which it ever immediately induces-man forsaken by God, and thus forsaken, a picture to the whole universe of corruption and misery, resulting from that departure from him which is implied in one sinful act. But that spiritual, quickening influence visits him from another quarter and through other means. The second Adam "is a quickening Spirit." The Holy Spirit is the purchase of his redemption, to be given to man, that he may again infuse into his corrupted nature the heavenly life, and sanctify

and regenerate it. Here is the mercy. As to a future state, eternal life is promised to all men believing in Christ, which reverses the sentence of eternal death. Here again is the manifestation of mercy. Should this be rejected, he stands liable to the whole penalty, to the punishment of loss as the natural consequence of his corrupted nature which renders him unfit for heaven: to the punishment of even pain for the original offence, we may also, without injustice, say, as to an adult, whose actual

transgressions, when the means of deliverance have been afforded him by Christ, is a consenting to all rebellion against God, and to that of Adam himself: and to the penalty of his own actual transgressions, aggravated by his having made light of the Gospel. Here is the collateral display of justice. In all this, it is impossible to impeach the equity of the Divine procedure, since no man suffers any loss or injury ultimately by the sin of Adam, but by his own willful obstinacy-the "abounding of grace," by

Christ, having placed before all men, upon their believing, not merely compensation for the loss and injury sustained by Adam, but infinitely higher blessings, both in kind or degree, than were forfeited in him. As to adults, then, the objection taken from Divine justice is unsupported.

We now come to the case of persons dying in infancy. The great consideration which leads to a solution of this case is found in Romans 5:18, "Therefore, as by the offence of one

judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." In these words, the sin of Adam and the merits of Christ are pronounced to be co-extensive; the words applied to both are precisely the same, "judgment came upon all men," "the free gift came upon all men." If the whole human race be meant in the former clause, the whole human race is meant in the latter also; and it follows that as all are

injured by the offence of Adam, so all are benefited by the obedience of Christ. Whatever, therefore, that benefit may be, all children dying in infancy must partake of it, or there would be a large portion of the human race upon whom the "free gift," the effects of "the righteousness of one," did not "come," which is contrary to the apostle's words.

This benefit, whatever it might be, did not so "come upon all men" as to relieve them immediately from the

sentence of death. This is obvious, from men being still liable to die, and from the existence of a corrupt nature or spiritual death in all mankind. As this is the case with adults, who grow up from a state of childhood, and who can both trace the corruptness of their nature to their earliest years, and were always liable to bodily death; so, for this reason, it did not come immediately upon children, whether they die in infancy or not. - For there is no more reason to conclude that those children who die in infancy

were born with a pure nature, than they who live to man-hood; and the fact of their being born liable to death, a part of the penalty, is sufficient to show that they were born under the whole malediction.

The "free gift," however, which has come upon all men, by the righteousness of one, is said to be

"unto justification of life," the full reversal of the penalty of death; and, by "the abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness," the benefit extends to the "reigning in

life by one, Jesus Christ." If the "free gift" is so given to all men that this is the end for which it is given, then is this "justification of life," and this "reigning in life by Jesus Christ," as truly within the reach of infants, dying in infancy, as within the reach of adults living to years of choice. This "free gift" is bestowed upon "all men," (eis), in order to justification of life; it follows, then, that, in the case of infants, this gift may be connected with the end for which it was given, as well as in the case of adults, or it would be given

in vain, and in fact be, in no sense whatever, a gift or benefit, standing opposed, in Its result, to condemnation and death.

Now we know clearly by what means the "free gift," which is bestowed in order to justification of life, (that is, that act of God by which a sinner, under sentence of death, is adjudged to life,) is connected with that end in the case of adults. The gift "comes upon them," in its effects, very largely, independent of any thing they do-in the long suffering of God; in the

instructions of the Gospel; the warnings of ministers; the corrective dispensations of Providence; above all, in preventing grace, and the influences of the Holy Spirit removing so much of their spiritual death as to excite in them various degrees of religious feeling, and enabling them to seek the face of God, to turn at his rebuke, and, by improving that grace, to repent and believe the Gospel. In a word, "justification of life" is offered them; nay, more, it is pressed upon them, and

they fail of it only by rejecting it. If they yield and embrace the offer, then the end for which "the free gift came" upon them is attained - "justification of life."

As to infants, they are not, indeed, born justified and regenerate; so that to say that original sin is taken away, as to infants, by Christ, is not the correct view of the case, for the reasons before given; but they are all born under the "free gift," the effects of the "righteousness" of one, which extended to "all

men;" and this free gift is bestowed on them in order to justification of life, the adjudging of the condemned to live. All the mystery, therefore, in the case arises from this, that in adults we see the free gift connected with its end, actual justification, by acts of their own, repentance and faith; but as to infants, we are not informed by what process justification, with its attendant blessings, is actually bestowed, though the words of the apostle are express, that through "the righteousness of one" they

are entitled to it. Nor is it surprising that this process should be hidden from us, since the Gospel was written for adults, though the benefit of it is designed for all; and the knowledge of this work of God, in the spirit of an infant, must presuppose an acquaintance with the properties of the human soul, which is, in fact, out of our reach. If, however, an infant is not capable of a voluntary acceptance of the benefit of the "free gift;" neither, on the other hand, is it capable of a voluntary rejection of it; and it is by

rejecting it that adults perish. If much of the benefit of this "free gift" comes upon us as adults, independent of our seeking it; and if, indeed, the very power and inclination to seek justification of life is thus prevenient, and in the highest sense free; it follows, by the same rule of the Divine conduct, that the Holy Spirit may be given to children; that a Divine and an effectual influence may be exerted on them, which, meeting with no voluntary resistance, shall cure the spiritual death and corrupt

tendency of their nature; and all this without supposing any great difference in the principle of the administration of this grace in their case and that of adults. But the different circumstances of children dying in their infancy, and adults, proves also that a different administration of the same grace, which is freely bestowed upon all, must take place. Adults are personal offenders, infants are not; for the former, confession of sin, repentance, and the trust of persons consciously

perishing for their transgressions, are appropriate to their circumstances, but not to those of the latter; and the very wisdom of God may assure us that, in prescribing the terms of salvation, that is, the means by which the "free gift" shall pass to its issue, justification of life, the circumstances of the persons must be taken into account. The reason of pardon, in every case, is not repentance, not faith, not anything done by man, but the merit of the sacrifice of Christ.

Repentance and faith are, it is true, in the case of adults, a sine qua non, but in no sense the meritorious cause. The reasons of their being attached to the promise, as conditions, are nowhere given, but they are nowhere enforced as such, except on adults. If, in adults, we see the meritorious cause working in conjunction with instrumental causes, they are capable of what is required; but when we see, even in adults, that, independent of their own acts, the meritorious cause is not inert, but fruitful in

vital influence and gracious dealing, we see such a separation of the operation of the grand meritorious cause, and the subordinate instrumental causes, as to prove that the benefits of the death of Christ are not, in every degree, and consequently, on the same principle, not in every case, conferred under the restraints of conditions. So certainly is infant salvation attested by the Scriptures; so explicitly are we told that the free gift is come upon all men to justification of life, and that none can come short

of this blessing but those who reject it.

But there is another class of instrumental causes to be taken into the account in the case of children; though they arise not out of their personal acts. The first and greatest, and general one, is the intercession of Christ himself, which can never be fruitless; and that children are the objects of his intercession is certain, both from his office as the intercessor of all mankind, the

"mediator between God and man," that is, all men; and from his actually praying for children in the days of his abode on earth. "He took them up in his arms and blessed them;" which benediction was either in the form of prayer, or it was authoritative, which makes the case still stronger. As to their future state, he seems also to open a sufficiently encouraging view, when he declares that, "of such is the kingdom of heaven;" for, whether we understand this of future felicity, or of the Church, the case is

settled; in neither case can they be under wrath, and liable to condemnation.

Other instrumental causes of the communication of this benefit to 'infants, wherever the ordinances of the Christian Church are established, and used in faith, are the prayers of parents, and baptism in the name of Christ; means which cannot be without their effect, both as to infants who die, and those who live; and which, as God's own ordinances, he cannot but honor, in different degrees, it may

be, as to those who live and those whom he intends to call to himself; but which are still meant of grace, and channels of saving influence; or they are dead forms, ill becoming that which is so eminently a dispensation, not of the letter, but of the spirit.

The injustice, then, alleged as implicated in the doctrine of original sin, when considered in this its whole and Scriptural view, entirely vanishes; and, at the same time, the evil of sin is manifested, and the justice also of the Lawgiver,

for mercy comes not by relaxing the hold of justice. That still has its full manifestation in the exaction of vicarious obedience to death, even the death of the cross, from the second Adam, who made himself the federal head of fallen men, and gave "justification unto life" only by his submission to "judgment unto condemnation."

Having thus established the import of the death threatened as the penalty of Adam's transgression, to include corporal, moral, or

spiritual and eternal death; and showed that the sentence included also the whole of his posterity, our next step is to ascertain that moral condition in which men are actually born into the world, notwithstanding that gracious provision which is made in Christ for human redemption. On this the testimony of Scripture is so explicit and ample, and its humbling representations are so borne out by consciousness and by experience, that it may well be matter of surprise, that the natural innocence of

human nature should ever have had its advocates, at least among those who profess to receive the Bible as the word of God. In entering upon the subject of this corruption of human nature, it must first be stated, that there are several facts of history and experience to be accounted for; and that they must all be taken into account in the different theories which are advocated.

1. That in all ages great, and even general wickedness has prevailed among those large masses

of men which are called nations.

So far as it relates to the immediate descendants of Adam before the flood; to all the nations of the highest antiquity; to the Jews through, out every period of their history, down to their final dispersion; and to the empires and other states whose history is involved in theirs; we have the historical evidence of Scripture, and much collateral evidence also from their own historians.

To what does this evidence go, but, to say the least, the actual depravity of the majority of mankind in all these ages, and among all these nations? As to the race before the flood, a murderer sprang up in the first family, and the world became increasingly corrupt, until "God saw that the wickedness of man was great, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually;" "that all flesh had corrupted their way upon earth;" and that "the earth was filled with violence through

them." Only Noah was found righteous before God; and because of the universal wickedness, a wicked, ness which spurned all warning, and resisted all correction, the flood was brought upon the world of the ungodly, as a testimony of Divine anger.

'The same course of increasing wickedness is exhibited in the sacred records as taking place after the flood. The building of the tower of Babel was a wicked act, done by general concert, before the division of

nations; this we know from its having excited the Divine displeasure, though we know not in what the particular crime consisted. After the division of nations, the history of the times of Abraham, Lot, Jacob, Joseph, and Moses, sufficiently show that idolatry, injustice, oppression, and gross sensualities characterized the people of Canaan, Egypt, and every other country mentioned in the Mosaic narrative.

The obstinate inclination of the Israelites to idolatry,

through all ages to the Babylonish captivity, and the general prevalence of vice among men, is acknowledged in every part of the Old Testament. Their moral wickedness, after their return from Babylon, when they no longer practiced idolatry, and were, therefore, delivered from that most fruitful source of crime, may be collected from the writers of the Old Testament who lived after that event; and their general corruption in the time of our Lord and his apostles stands forth with disgusting

prominence in their writings and in the writings of Josephus, their own historian.

As to all other ancient nations, of whom we have any history, the accounts agree in stating the general prevalence of practical immorality and of malignant and destructive passions; and if we had no such acknowledgments from themselves; if no such reproaches were mutually cast upon each other; if history were not, as indeed it is, a record of crimes, in action and in detail; and if

poets, moralists, and satirists did not all give their evidence, by assuming that men were influenced by general principles of vice, expressing themselves in particular modes in different ages, the following great facts would prove the case:-

The fact of general religious error, and that in the very fundamental principles of religion, such as the existence of one only God; which universal corruption of doctrine among all the ancient

nations mentioned above, shows both indifference to truth and hostility against it, and therefore proves, at least, the general corruption of men's hearts, of which even indifference to religious truth is a sufficient indication.

The universal prevalence of idolatry, which not only argues great debasement of intellect, but deep wickedness of heart, because, in all ages, idolatry has been more or less immoral in its influence, and generally grossly so, by leading

directly to sanguinary and impure practices.

The prevalence of superstition wherever idolatry has prevailed, and often when that has not existed, is another proof. The essence of this evil is the transfer of fear and hope from God to real or imaginary creatures and things, and so is a renunciation of allegiance to God, as the Governor of the world, and a practical denial either of his being or his providence.

Aggressive wars, in the guilt of which all nations

and all uncivilized tribes have been, in all ages, involved, and which necessarily suppose hatred, revenge, cruelty, injustice, and ambition.

The accounts formerly given of the innocence and harmlessness of the Hindus, Chinese, the inhabitants of the South Sea Islands, and other parts of the world, are now found to be total mistakes or willful falsehoods.

In all heathen nations, idolatry, superstition, fraud, oppression, and vices of almost every

description, show the general state of society to be exceedingly and even destructively corrupt; and though Mohammedan nations escape the charge of idolatry, yet pride, avarice, oppression, injustice, cruelty, sensuality, and gross superstition, are all prevalent among them.

The case of Christian nations, though in them immorality is more powerfully checked than in any other, and many bright and influential examples of the highest virtue are found

among their inhabitants, sufficiently proves that the majority are corrupt and vicious in their habits. The impiety and profaneness; the neglect of the fear and worship of God; the fraud and villainy continually taking place in the commerce of mankind; the intemperance of various kinds which is found among all classes; the oppression of the poor; and many other evils, are in proof of this; and, indeed, we may confidently conclude, that no advocate of the natural innocence of man will contend that the

majority of men, even in this country, are actually virtuous in their external conduct, and much less that the fear and love of God, and habitual respect to his will, which are, indeed, the only principles which can be deemed to constitute a person righteous, influence the people at large, or even any very large proportion of them.

The fact, then, is established, which was before laid down, that men in all ages and in all places

have, at least, been generally wicked.

2. The second fact to be accounted for is, the strength of that tendency to the wickedness which we have seen to be general.

The strength of the corrupting principle, whatever it may be, is marked by two circumstances.

The first is, the greatness of the crimes to which men have abandoned themselves.

If the effects of the corrupt principle had only been

manifested in trifling errors, and practical infirmities, a softer view of the moral condition in which man is born into the world might, probably, have been admitted; but in the catalogue of human crimes, in all ages, and among great numbers of all nations, but more especially among those nations where there has been the least control of religion, and, therefore, where the natural dispositions of men have exhibited themselves under the simplest and most convincing evidence, we

find frauds, oppressions, faithlessness, barbarous cruelties and murders, unfeeling oppressions, falsehoods, every kind of uncleanness, uncontrolled anger, deadly hatred and revenge, as to their fellow creatures, and proud and scornful rebellion against God.

The second is, the number and influence of the checks and restraints against which this tide of wickedness has urged on its almost resist, less and universal course.

It has opposed itself against the law of God, in some degree found among all men; consequently, against the checks and remorse of con-science; against a settled conviction of the evil of most of the actions indulged in, which is shown by their having been blamed in others (at least whenever any have suffered by them) by those who themselves have been in the habit of committing them.

Against the restraints of human laws, and the authority of magistrates;

for, in all ancient states, the moral corruption continued to spread until they were politically dissolved, society not being able to hold itself together, in consequence of the excessive height to which long indulgence had raised passion and appetite.

Against the provision made to check human vices by that judicial act of the Governor of the world, by which he shortened the life of man, and rendered it uncertain, and, at the longest, brief.

Against another provision made by the Governor of the world, in part with the same view, i.e., the dooming of man to earn his sustenance by labor, and thus providing for the occupation of the greater portion of time in what was innocent, and rendering the means of sensual indulgences more scanty, and the opportunities of actual immorality more limited.

Against the restraints put upon vice, by rendering it, by the constitution and the very nature of things, the

source of misery of all kinds and degrees, national, domestic, personal, mental, and bodily.

Against the terrible judgments which God has, in all ages, brought upon wicked nations and notorious individuals, many of which visitations were known and acknowledged to be the signal manifestations of his displeasure against their vices.

Against those counteractive and reforming influences of the revelations of the

will and mercy of God, which at different times have been vouchsafed to the world: as, against the light and influence of the patriarchal religion before the giving of the law; against the Mosaic institute, and the warnings of prophets among the Jews; against the religious knowledge which was transmitted from them among heathen nations connected with their history, at different periods; against the influence of Christianity when introduced into the Roman empire, and when

transmitted to the Gothic nations, by all of whom it was grossly corrupted; and against the control of the same Divine religion in our own country, where it is exhibited in its purity, and in which the most active endeavors are adopted to enlighten and correct society.

It is impossible to consider the number and power of these checks without acknowledging, that those principles in human nature which give rise to the mass of moral evil which actually exists, and has always

existed since men began to multiply upon the earth, are most powerful and formidable in their tendency.

3. The third fact is, that the seeds of the vices which exist in society may be discovered in children in their earliest years; selfishness, envy, pride, resentment, deceit, lying, and often cruelty; and so much is this the case, so explicitly is this acknowledged by all, that it is the principal object of the moral branch of education to restrain and

correct those evils, both by coercion, and by diligently impressing upon children, as their faculties open, the evil and mischief of all such affections and tendencies.

4. The fourth fact is, that every man is conscious of a natural tendency to many evils.

These tendencies are different in degree and in kind. (1) In some they move to ambition, and pride, and excessive love of honor; in others, to anger, revenge, and implacableness; in others, to cowardice, meanness,

and fear; in others, to avarice, care, and distrust; in others, to sensuality and prodigality. But where is the man who has not his peculiar constitutional tendency to some evil in one of these classes? But there are, also, evil tendencies common to all. These are, to love creatures more than God; to forget God; to be indifferent to our obligations to him; to regard the opinions of men more than the approbation of God; to be more influenced by the visible things which surround us than by the invisible God,

whose eye is ever upon us, and by that invisible state to which we are all hastening.

(1) "Omnia in omnibus vitri sunt; sed non omnia in singulis extant.'" (Seneca.) It is the constant practice of those who advocate the natural innocence of man, to lower the standard of the Divine law under which, man is placed; and to this they are necessarily driven, in order to give some plausibility to their opinions. They must palliate the conduct of men; and this can only be

done by turning moral evils into natural ones, or into innocent infirmities, and by so stating the requisitions made upon our obedience by our Maker, as to make them consistent with many irregularities. But we have already shown, that the love of God requires our supreme love and our entire obedience; and it will, therefore, follow, that whatever is contrary to love and to entire subjection, whether in principle, in thought, in word, and in action, is sinful; and if so, then the tendency to evil,

in every man, must, and on these premises will, be allowed. Nor will it serve any purpose to say, that man's weakness and infirmity is such that he cannot yield this-perfect obedience; for means of sanctification and supernatural aid are provided for him in the Gospel; and what is it that renders him indifferent to them but the corruptness of his heart?

Beside, this very plea allows all we contend for. It allows that the law is lowered, because of human

inability to observe it and to resist temptation; but this itself proves, (were we even to admit the fiction of this lowering of the requisitions of the law,) that man is not now in the state in which he was created, or it would not have been necessary to bring the standard of obedience down to his impaired condition.

5. The fifth fact is, that, even after a serious wish and intention has been formed in men to renounce these views, and "to live righteously, soberly, and

godly," as becomes creatures made to glorify God, and on their trial for eternity, strong and constant resistance is made by the passions, appetites, and inclinations of the heart at every step of the attempt.

This is so clearly a matter of universal experience, that, in the moral writings of every age and country, and in the very phrases and turns of all languages, virtue is associated with difficulty, and represented under the notion of a warfare. Virtue has always,

therefore, been represented as the subject of acquirement; and resistance of evil as being necessary to its preservation. It has been made to consist in self-rule, which is, of course, restraint upon opposite tendencies; the mind is said to be subject to diseases, (2) and the remedy for these diseases is placed in something outward to itself-in religion, among inspired men; in philosophy, among the heathen.

(3)

(2) "Hac conditione nati sumus, animalia obnoxia non paucioribus animi quam corporis morbis."

(Seneca.)

(3) "Videamus quanta sint quae a philosophia remedia morbis animorum adhibeantur; est enim quaedam medicina certe," &c. (Cicero.)

This constant struggle against the rules and resolves of virtue has been acknowledged in all ages, and among Christian nations more especially, where, just as the

knowledge of what the Divine law require? is diffused, the sense of the difficulty of approaching to its requisition? is felt; and in proportion as the efforts made to conform to it are sincere, is the despair which arises from repeated and constant defeats, when the aid of Divine grace is not called in. "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

These five facts of universal history and experience, as they cannot be denied, and as it would be most absurd

to discuss the moral condition of human nature without any reference to them, must be accounted for; and it shall now be our business to inquire, whether they can be best explained on the hypothesis drawn from the Scripture, that man is by nature totally corrupt and degenerate, and of himself incapable of any good thing; or on the hypothesis of man's natural goodness, or, at worst, his natural indifference equally to good and to evil; notions which come to us ab initio with this disadvantage, that

they have no text of Scripture to adduce to afford them any plausible support whatever.

The testimony of Scripture is decidedly in favor of the first hypothesis.

It has already been established, that the full penalty of Adam's offence passed upon his posterity; and, consequently, that part of it which consists in the spiritual death which has been before explained. A full provision to meet this case is, indeed, as we have seen, made in the Gospel; but that does not

affect the state in which men are born. It is a cure for an actually existing disease brought by us into the world; for, were not this the case, the evangelical institution would be one of prevention, not of remedy, under which light it is always represented.

If, then, we are all born in a state of spiritual death; that is, without that vital influence of God upon our faculties, which we have seen to be necessary to give them a right, a holy tendency, and to maintain

them in it; and if that is restored to man by a dispensation of grace and favor, it follows that, in his natural state, he is born with sinful propensities, and that, by nature, he is capable, in his own strength, of "no good thing."

With this the Scriptural account agrees.

It is probable, though great stress need not be laid upon it, that when it is said, Gen. 5:3, that

"Adam begat a son in his own likeness," that there is

an implied opposition between the likeness of God, in which Adam was made, and the likeness of Adam, in which his son was begotten. It is not said, that he begat a son in the likeness of God; a very appropriate expression if Adam had not fallen, and if human nature had sustained, in consequence, no injury; and such a declaration was apparently called for, had this been the case, to show, what would have been a very important fact, that, notwithstanding the personal delinquency of Adam, yet human nature

itself had sustained no deterioration, but was propagated without corruption. On the contrary, it is said, that he begat a son in his own likeness; which, probably, was mentioned on purpose to exclude the idea, that the image of God was hereditary in man.

In Gen. 6:5, it is stated, as the cause of the flood, that "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."

Here, it is true, that the actual moral state of the antediluvians may only be spoken of, and that the text does not directly prove the doctrine of hereditary depravity: yet is the actual wickedness of man traced up to the heart, as its natural source, in a manner which seems to intimate, that the doctrine of the natural corruption of man was held by the writer, and by that his mode of expression was influenced. "The heart of man is here put for his soul. This God had formed with a marvelous thinking power.

But so is his soul debased, that every imagination, figment, formation of the thoughts of it, is evil, only evil, continually evil. Whatever it forms within itself as a thinking power, is an evil formation. If all men's actual wickedness sprung from the evil formation of their corrupt heart, and if, consequently, they were sinners from the birth, so are all others likewise." (Hebden.)

That this was the theological sentiment held and taught by Moses, and implied even in this

passage, is made very clear by Gen. 8:21, "I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake: for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every living thing." The sense of which plainly is, that, notwithstanding the wickedness of mankind, though they sin from their childhood, yet would he not, on that account, again destroy
"every living thing." Here it is to be observed, 1. That the words are spoken as soon as Noah came forth

from the ark, and, therefore, after the antediluvian race of actual and flagrant transgressors had perished, and before the family of Noah had begun to multiply upon the earth; when, in fact, there were no human beings upon earth but righteous Noah and his family. 2. That they are spoken of "man" as MAN; that is, of human nature, and, consequently, of Noah himself and the persons saved with him in the ark. 3. That it is affirmed of man, that is, of mankind, that the imagination of the

heart "is evil from his youth." Now the term "imagination" includes the thoughts, affections, and inclinations; and the word "youth" the whole time from the birth, the earliest age of man. This passage, therefore, affirms the natural and hereditary tendency of man to evil.

The book of Job, which embodies the patriarchal theology, gives ample testimony to this as the faith of those ancient times. Job 11:12, "Vain man would be wise, though man be born like a wild ass's

colt;" fierce, untractable, and scarcely to be subjected. This is the case from his birth; it is affirmed of man, and is equally applicable to every age; it is his natural condition, he is "born"

literally, "the colt of a wild ass."

"Man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward," Job 5:7; that is, he is inevitably subjected to trouble; this is the law of his state in this world, as fixed and certain as one of the laws of nature.

The proof from this passage is inferential; but very decisive. Unless man is born a sinner, it is not to be accounted for, that he should be born to trouble. Pain and death are the consequences only of sin, and absolutely innocent beings must be exempt from them.

"Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" Job 14:4. The word thing is supplied by our translators, but person is evidently understood. Cleanness and uncleanness, in the language of Scripture,

signify sin and holiness; and the text clearly asserts the natural impossibility of any man being born sinless, because he is produced by guilty and defiled parents.

"What is man, that he should be clean; and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?" Job 15:14. The same doctrine is here affirmed as in the preceding text, only more fully, and it may be taken as an explanation of the former, which was, perhaps, a proverbial

expression. The rendering of the LXX. is here worthy of notice, for, though it does not agree with the present Hebrew text, it strongly marks the sentiments of the ancient Jews on the point in question. "Who shall be clean from filth? Not one; even though his life on earth be a single day"

Psalm 51:5, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." What possible sense can be given to this passage on the hypothesis of man's natural innocence? It is in

vain to render the first clause, "I was brought forth in iniquity;" for nothing is gained by it. David charges nothing upon his mother, of whom he is not speaking, but of himself: he was conceived, or, if it please better, was born a sinner. And if the rendering of the latter clause were allowed, which yet has no authority, "in sin did my mother nurse me;" still no progress is made in getting quit of its testimony to the moral corruption of children, for it is the child only which is nursed, and, if that be allowed, natural

depravity is allowed, depravity before reason, able choice, which is the point in question.

Psalm 58:3, 4, "The wicked are estranged from the womb, they go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies," They are alienated from the womb; "alienated from the life of God, from the time of their coming into the world." (Wesley.) "Speaking lies:" they show a tendency to speak lies as soon as they are capable of it, which shows the existence of a

natural principle of falsehood.

Proverbs 22:15, and 29:15, "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him." "The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame." "These passages put together are a plain testimony of the inbred corruption of young children. 'Foolishness,' in the former, is not barely 'appetite,' or a want of the knowledge attain, able by instruction, as some have

said. Neither of these deserve that sharp correction recommended. But it is an indisposedness to what is good, and a strong propensity to evil. This foolishness 'is bound up in the heart of a child;' it is rooted in his inmost nature. It is, as it were, fastened to him by strong cords; so the original word signifies. From this corruption of the heart in every child, it is that ' the rod of correction' is necessary to give him wisdom; hence it is that a child left to himself, without correction,' brings

his mother to shame.' If a child were born equally inclined to virtue and vice, why should the wise man speak of foolishness, or wickedness as fastened so closely to his heart? And why should the rod and reproof be so necessary for him? These texts, therefore, are another clear proof of the corruption of human nature." (Hebden.)

The quotation of Psalm 14:2, 3, by the Apostle Paul, in Romans 3:10, &c, is also an important Scriptural proof of the universal moral corruption of

mankind. "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God.

They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." When the psalmist affirms this of the children of men, it is fair to conclude that he is speaking of all men, and of human nature as originating actual depravity; and it is, indeed, obvious, from the context, that he is thus ac-counting for Atheism and other

evils, the prevalence of which he laments. But, as the apostle quotes this passage and the parallel one in the 53rd Psalm as Scriptural proofs of the universal corruption of mankind, the sense of the psalmist is fixed by his authority, and cannot be questioned. All, indeed, that the opponents of this interpretation can say, is, that, in the same psalm the psalmist speaks also of righteous persons, "God is in the generation of the righteous;" but that is nothing to the purpose, seeing that those who

contend for the universal corruption of mankind, allow also that a remedy has been provided for the evil; and that by its application some, in every age, have been made righteous, who were originally and naturally sinful. In fact, it could not be said, with respect to men's actual moral conduct in that, or probably in any age, that "not one" was "righteous;" but in every age it may be said, that not one is so originally, or by nature; so that the passage is not to be explained on the assumption that the

inspired writer is speaking only of the practice of mankind in his own times.

Of the same kind are all those passages which speak of what is morally evil as the characteristic and distinguishing mark, not of any individual, not of any particular people, living in some one age or part of the world; but of man, of human nature; and especially those which make sinfulness the natural state of that part of the human race who have not undergone that moral renovation which is the

fruit of a Divine operation in the heart, a work ascribed particularly to the Holy Spirit. Of these texts the number is very great, and it adds also to the strength of their evidence, that the subject is often mentioned incidentally, and by way of illustration and argument in support of something else, and must, therefore, be taken to be an acknowledged and settled opinion among the sacred writers, both of the Old and New Testament, and one which neither they nor those to whom they spoke

or wrote questioned or disputed.

"Cursed," says the Prophet Jeremiah, "is he that trusteth in man." Why in man, if he were not by nature unworthy of trust? On the scheme of man's natural innocence, it would surely have been more appropriate to say, Cursed be he that trusteth indiscriminately in men, some of whom may have become corrupt; but here human nature itself, man, in the abstract, is held up to suspicion and caution. "The heart," proceeds the

same prophet," is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?" which is the reason adduced for the caution preceding against trusting in man. It is precisely in the same way that our Lord designates human nature, when he affirms, that "from within, out of the heart, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, murders,

&c; all these things come from within, and defile the man." This representation would not be true, on the scheme of natural

innocence. All these things would come from without, not from within, as their original source. The heart must first be corrupted by outward circumstances, before it could be the corrupter.

But to proceed with instances of the more incidental references to the fault and disease of man's very nature, with which the Scriptures abound. "How much more abominable and filthy is man, who drinketh iniquity like water?" Job 15:16. "Madness is in the heart of

the sons of men, while they live," Eccles. 9:3. " But they like men have transgressed the covenant," Hos. 6:7. "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children," Matt, 7:11. "Thou savourest not the things that be of God; but the things that be of men," Matt. 16:23. "Are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" 1 Cor. 3:3. "That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the lusts of men; but to the will of God," 1 Peter 4:2. "We are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness," 1 John 5:19. "Except a man

be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God," John 3:8. "That ye put off the old man, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man,"

Eph. 4:22-24.

The above texts are to be considered as specimens of the manner in which the sacred writers speak of the subject rather than as approaching to an enumeration of the passages in which the same sentiments are found in great variety of expression, and which are adduced on

various occasions. They are, however, sufficient to show, that man, and the heart of man, and the moral nature of man, as spoken of by them in a way not to be reconciled to the notion of their purity, or even their indifference to good and evil. On two parts of the New Testament, however, which irresistibly fix the whole of this evidence in favor of the opinion of the universal Church of Christ, in all ages, our remarks may be some-what more extended. The first is our Lord's discourse with Nico-

demus, John 3, in which he declares the necessity of a new birth, in contradistinction to our natural birth, in order to our entrance into the kingdom of GOD; and lays it down, that the Spirit of God is the sole author of this change, and that what is born of the flesh cannot alter its nature; it is flesh still, and must always remain so, and in that state is unfit for heaven. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God; that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that

which is born of the Spirit is spirit," Throughout the New Testament, it will be found, that when flesh and spirit are, in a moral sense, opposed to each other, the one means the corrupt nature and habits of men, not sanctified by the Gospel; the other, either the principle and habit of holiness in good men, or the Holy Spirit himself, who imparts, and constantly nurtures them. "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing," Rom. 7:18. "I myself with the mind serve the law of God; but with

the flesh, the law of sin," Rom. 7:25. "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," Rom. 8:1. "They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the

flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you," Rom. 8:5-9.

These passages from St. Paul serve to fix the meaning of the terms; flesh and Spirit, as used by the Jews, and as they occur in the discourse of our Lord with Nicodemus; and they are so exactly parallel to it, that they fully confirm the opinion of those who understand our Lord as expressly asserting, that man is by nature corrupt and sinful, and unfit, in

consequence, for the kingdom of heaven; and that all amendment of his case must result, not from himself, so totally is he gone from original righteousness; but from that special operation of the Holy Spirit which produces a new birth or regeneration. Both assert the natural state of man to be fleshly, that is, morally corrupt; both assert, that in man himself there is no remedy; and both attribute principles of holiness to a supernatural agency, the agency of the Spirit of God himself.

No criticism can make this language consistent with the theory of natural innocence. St. Paul describes the state of man, before he comes under the quickening and renewing influence of the Spirit, as being "in the flesh;" in which state "he cannot please God;" as having a "carnal mind"

which "is not, and cannot be, subject to the law of God." Our Lord, in like manner, describes the state of "the flesh," this condition of entire unfitness for the kingdom

of heaven as our natural state; and to make this the stronger, he refers this unfitness for heaven not to our acquired habits, but to the state in which we are born; for the very reason which he gives for the necessity of a new birth is, that "that which is born of the flesh is flesh," and therefore we "must be born again." To interpret, therefore, the phrase, "to be flesh, as being born of the flesh," merely to signify that we are, by natural birth, endowed with the physical powers of human nature, is utterly absurd;

for what, then, is it to be born of the Spirit! Is it to receive physical powers which do not belong to human nature? Or, if they go a step farther, and admit, that "to be flesh as being born of the flesh," means to be frail and mortal like our parents; still the interpretation is a physical and not a moral one, and leads to this absurdity, that we must interpret the being born of the Spirit physically and not morally, likewise. Now since the being born 'of the Spirit refers to a change which is effected in time,

and not at the resurrection, because our Lord speaks of being

"born of water," as well as the Spirit, by which he means baptism; and, as St. Paul says to the Romans, in the passage above quoted, "ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit:" and therefore speaks of their present experience in this world, it may be asked, what physical change did, in reality, take place in them in consequence of being "born of the Spirit?" On all hands it is allowed, that none took place; that they

remained "frail and mortal" still; and it follows, therefore, that it is a moral and not a physical change which is spoken of, both by our Lord and by the apostle; and, if a moral change from sin to holiness, then is the natural state of man from his birth, and in consequence of his birth, sinful and corrupt.

The other passage is the argument in the third chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, in which the apostle "proves both Jews and Gentiles under sin,

that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God;" and then proposes the means of salvation by faith in Christ, on the express ground that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."

Whoever reads that argument, and considers the universality of the terms used, all, every, all the world, both Jews and gentiles, must conclude, in all fairness of interpretation, that the whole human race, of every age, is intended. But, if any

will construe his words partially, then he is placed in the following dilemma:- The apostle grounds the wisdom and mercy of that provision which is made for man's salvation in the Gospel upon man's sinfulness, danger, and helplessness.

Now the Gospel as a remedy for disease, as salvation from danger, is designed for all men, or but for a part; if for all, then all are diseased and in danger; if but for a part, then the undiseased part of the human race, those who are

in no danger, have no interest in the Gospel, it is not adapted to their case; and not only is the argument of the apostle lost, but those who advocate this notion must explain how it is, that our Lord himself commanded the Gospel to be preached "to every creature," if but a part of mankind needs its salvation.

The doctrine, then, of Scripture is, I think, clearly established to be, that of the natural and universal corruption of man's nature; and we now consider,

whether on this ground, or on the hypothesis of man's natural innocence or indifference to good or to evil, the facts above enumerated can be best explained. They are, 1. The, at least, general corruption of manners in all times and countries. 2. The strength of the tendency in man to evil. 3. The early appearance of the principles of various vices in children. 4. Every man's consciousness of a natural tendency in his mind to one or more evils. 5. That general resistance to virtue in the heart, which renders

education, influence, watchfulness, and conflict necessary to counteract the force of evil. These points have been already explained more at large; and they are facts which, it is presumed, cannot be denied, and such as have the confirmation of history and experience.

That they are easily and fully accounted for by the Scriptural doc-trine is obvious. The fountain is bitter, and the tree is corrupt; the bitter stream and the bad fruit are, therefore, the natural

consequences. But the advocates of the latter hypothesis have no means of accounting for these moral phenomena, except by referring them to bad ex-ample and a vicious education.

Let us take the first. To account for general wickedness, they refer to general example.

But, 1. This does not account for the introduction of moral wickedness. The children of Adam were not born until after the repentance of our first parents and

their restoration to the Divine favor. They appear to have been his devout worshippers, and to have had access to his

"presence," the visible glory of the Shechinah. From what ex ample, then, did Cain learn malice, hatred, and finally, murder? Example will not account, also, for the too common fact of the children of highly virtuous parents becoming immoral; for, since the examples nearest to them and constantly present with them are good

examples, if the natural disposition were as good as this hypothesis assumes, the good example always present ought to be more influential than bad examples at a distance, and only occasionally seen or heard of.

2. If men are naturally disposed to good, or only not indisposed to it, it is not accounted for, on this hypothesis, how bad example should have become general, that is, how men should generally have become wicked.

If the natural disposition be more in favor of good than evil, then there ought to have been more good than evil in the world, which is contradicted by fact; if there had been only an indifference in our minds to good and evil, then at least, the quantum of vice and virtue in society ought to have been pretty equally divided, which is also contrary to fact; and also it ought to have followed from this, that at least all the children of virtuous persons would have been virtuous: that, for instance, the

descendants of Seth would have followed in succession the steps of their righteous forefathers, though the children of Cain (passing by the difficulty of his own lapse) should have become vicious. On neither supposition can the existence of a general evil example in the world be accounted for. It ought not to have existed, and if so, the general corruption of mankind cannot be explained by it.

3. This very method of explaining the general viciousness of society does

itself suppose the power of bad example; and, indeed, in this it agrees with universal opinion, All the moralists of public and domestic life, all professed teachers, all friends of youth, all parents have repeated their cautions against evil society to those whom they wished to preserve from vice. The writings of moralists, heathen and inspired, are full of these admonitions, and they are embodied in the proverbs and wise traditional sayings of all civilized nations. But the very force of evil example

can only be accounted for, by supposing a proneness in youth to be corrupted by it. Why should it be more influential than good example, a fact universally acknowledged, and so strongly felt, that, for one person preserved by the sole influence of a good example, everybody expects that a great number would be corrupted by an evil one? But if the hypothesis of man's natural innocence were true, this ought not to be expected as a probable, much less as a certain result.

Bad example would meet with resistance from a good nature; and it would be much more difficult to influence by bad examples than by good ones.

4. Nor does example account for the other facts in the above enumeration. It does not account for that strong bias to evil in men, which, in all ages, has borne down the most powerful restraints; for from this tendency that corrupt general example has sprung, which is alleged as the cause of it; and it must, therefore, have

existed previously, because the general example, that is, the general corrupt practice of men is its effect. We cannot, in this way, account for the early manifestation of wrong principles, tempers, and affections in children; since they appear at an age when example can have little influence, and even when the surrounding examples are good, as well as when they are evil. Why, too, should virtue always be found more or less a conflict 1

so that self-government and self-resistance are, in all cases, necessary for its preservation. The example of others will not account for this; for mere example can only influence when it is approved by the judgment; but here is a case in which evil is not approved, in which "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are pure," are approved, desired, and cultivated; and yet the resistance of the heart to the judgment is so powerful, that a constant warfare and a

strict command are necessary to perseverance.

Let us, then, see whether a bad education, the other cause, usually alleged to account for these facts, will be more successful.

1. This cause will no more account for the introduction of passions so hateful as those of Cain, issuing in a fratricide so odious, into the family of Adam, than will example. As there was no example of these evils in the primeval family, so certainly there was no education which could incite and encourage

them. We are, also, left still without a reason why, in well-ordered and religious families, where education and the example, too, is good, so many instances of their inefficacy should occur. If bad education corrupts a naturally well-disposed mind, then a good education ought still more powerfully to affect it, and give it a right tendency. It is allowed, that good example and good education are, in many instances, effectual; but we can account for them, without giving up the doctrine of the natural

corruption of the heart. It is, however, impossible for those to account for those failures of both example and instruction which often take place, since, on the hypothesis of man's natural innocence and good disposition, they ought never to occur, or, at least, but in very rare cases, and when some singular counteracting external causes happen to come into operation.

2. We may also ask, how it came to pass, unless there were a predisposing cause to it, that education, as well

as example, should have been generally bad? Of education, indeed, men are usually more careful than of example. The lips are often right when the life is wrong; and many practice evil who will not go so far as to teach it. If human nature, then, be born pure, or, at worst, equally disposed to good and evil, then the existence of a generally corrupting system of education, in all countries and among all people, cannot be accounted for. We have an effect either contrary to the assigned cause, or one to

which the cause is not adequate-it is the case of a pure fountain sending forth corrupt streams; or that of a stream which, if turbid, has a constant tendency to defecation, and yet becomes still more muddy as it flows along its course.

3. It is not, however, the fact, that education is directly and universally so corrupting a cause as to account for the depravity of mankind. In many instances it has been defective; it has often inculcated false views of interest and honor; it has

fostered prejudices and even national, though not social, hatreds; but it has only in few cases been employed to teach those vices into which men have commonly fallen. In fact, education, in all countries, has been, in no small degree, opposed to vice; and, as the majority of the worst people among us would shudder to have their children instructed in the vices which they themselves practice, so in the worst nations of antiquity, the characters of schoolmasters were required to be correct, and

many principles and maxims of a virtuous kind were, doubtless, taught to children. When Horace says of youth,

"Cereus in vitium flecti, monitoribus asper," he acknowledges its natural tendency to receive vicious impressions, but shows, too, that it was not left without contrary admonition. Precisely in those vices which all education, even the most defective, is designed to guard against, the world has displayed its depravity most obviously; and thus,

so far from education being sufficient to account for the evils which have stained society in all ages, its influence has been, in no small degree, opposed to them.

4. To come to the other facts which must be accounted for, education is placed upon the same ground in the argument as example. The early evil dispositions in children cannot thus be explained, for they appear before education commences; nor does any man refer to education his propensity to

constitutional sins; the resistance he often feels to good in his heart; his proneness to forget God, and to be indifferent to spiritual and eternal objects; all these he feels to be opposed to those very principles which his judgment approves, and with which it was furnished by education.

It is only, then, by the Scriptural account of the natural and hereditary corruption of the human race, commonly called original sin, (4) that these facts are fully accounted

for; and as the facts themselves cannot be denied, such an interpretation of the Scripture as we have given above is, therefore, abundantly confirmed.

(4) The term "original sin" appears to have been first introduced by St. Augustine, in his controversy with the Pelagians.

As the fact of a natural inclination to evil cannot be successfully combated, some have taken a milder view of the case; and, allowing these tendencies

to various excesses, account for them by their being natural tendencies to what is pleasing, and so, for this reason, they deny them to be sinful, until they are complied with and approved by the will. This appears to be the view of Limborch, and some of the later divines of the Arminian school, who on this and other points very materially departed from the tenets of their master. (See Limborch's Theologia Christiana, liber iii, caput 4.) Nothing, however, is gained by this notion, when strictly examined; for, let it

be granted that these propensities are to things naturally pleasing, and that, in excess, they are out of their proper order; yet as it happens that, as soon as every person comes to years to know that they are wrong, as being contrary to the Divine law, he yet chooses them, and thus, without dispute, makes them sins; this universal compliance of the will with what is known to be evil is also to be accounted for, as well as the natural tendency to sinful gratifications. Now, as we have proved the

universality of sin, this universal tendency of the will to choose and sanction the natural propensity to unlawful gratification is the proof of a natural state of mind, not only defective, but corrupt, which is what we contend for. If it be said, that these natural propensities to various evils in children are not sinful before they have the consent of the will, all that can be maintained is, that they are not actual sins, which no one asserts; but as a universal choice of evil, when accountableness takes place, proves a

universal depravity of the will, previous to the actual choice, then it inevitably follows, that, though infants do not commit actual sin, yet that theirs is a sinful nature.

Finally, the death and sufferings to which children are subject is a proof that all men, from their birth, are "constituted," as the apostle has it, and treated as "sinners." An innocent creature may die; no one disputes that; but to die was not the original law of our species, and the

Scriptures refer death solely to sin as its cause. Throughout the sacred writings, too, it is represented as a penalty, as an evil of the highest kind; and it is in vain to find out ingenious reasons to prove it a blessing to mankind, They prove nothing against the directly opposite character which has been stamped upon death and the suffering of moral disease, by the testimony of God. On the hypothesis of man's natural innocence, the death of the innocent is not to be reconciled to any known attribute of God, to

any manifested principle of his moral government; but on that of his natural corruptness and federal relation to Adam it is explained: it is a declaration of God's hatred of sin; a proclamation of the purity and inflexibility of his law; while the connection of this state, with the provisions of the covenant of grace, present "mercy and truth meeting together, righteousness and peace kissing each other."

As to that in which original sin consists, some divines

and some public formularies have so expressed themselves, that it might be inferred that a positive evil, infection, and taint had been judicially infused into man's nature by God, which has been transmitted to all his posterity.

Others, and those the greater number, both of the Calvinist and Arminian schools, have resolved it into privation. This distinction is well stated in the Private Disputations of Arminius.

"But since the tenor of the covenant into which God entered with our first parents was this, that if they continued in the favor and grace of God, by the observance of that precept and others, the gifts which had been conferred upon them should be transmitted to their posterity, by the like Divine grace which they had received; but if they should render themselves unworthy of those favors, through disobedience, that their posterity should likewise be deprived of them, and should be liable

to the contrary evils: hence it followed, that all men, who were to be naturally propagated from them, have become obnoxious to death temporal and eternal, and have been destitute of that gift of the Holy Spirit, or of original righteousness. This punishment is usually called a privation of the image of God, and original sin.

"But we allow this point to be made the subject of discussion-beside the want or absence of original righteousness, may not

some other contrary quality be constituted, as another part of original sin? We think it is more probable, that this absence alone of original righteousness is original sin itself, since it alone is sufficient for the commission and production of every actual sin whatever."

This is by some divines called, with great aptness, "a depravation arising from a depravation,"

and is certainly much more consonant with the Scriptures than the opinion

of the infusion of evil qualities into the nature of man by a positive cause, or direct tainting of the heart. This has been, indeed, probably an opinion, in the proper sense, with few, and has rather been collected from the strong and rhetorical expressions under which the moral state of man is often exhibited, and, on this account, has been attacked as a part of the doctrine of original sin, by the advocates of original innocence, and as making God directly the author of sin. No such difficulty,

however, accompanies the accurate and guarded statement of that doctrine in the sense of Scripture. The depravation, the perversion, the defect of our nature is to be traced to our birth, so that in our flesh is no good thing, and they that are in the flesh cannot please God; but this state arises not from the infusion of evil into the nature of man by God, but from that separation of man from God, that extinction of spiritual life which was effected by sin, and the consequent and necessary corruption of

man's moral nature. For that positive evil and corruption may flow from a mere privation may be illustrated by that which supplies the figure of speech, "death," under which the Scriptures represent the state of mankind. For, as in the death of the body, the mere privation of the principle of life produces inflexibility of the muscles, the extinction of heat, and sense, and motion, and surrenders the body to the operation of an agency which life, as long as it continued, resisted, namely, that of chemical

decomposition; so, from the loss of spiritual life, followed estrangement from God, moral inability, the dominion of irregular passions, and the rule of appetite; aversion, in consequence, to restraint; and enmity to God.

This connection of positive evil, as the effect, with privation of the life and image of God, as the cause, is, however, to be well understood and carefully maintained, or otherwise we should fall into a great error on the other side, as, indeed, some have done,

who did not perceive that the corruption of man's nature necessarily followed upon the privation referred to. It is, therefore, a just remark of Calvin, that "those who have defined original sin as a privation of the original righteousness, though they comprise the whole of the subject, yet have not used language sufficiently expressive of its operation and influence. For our nature is not only destitute of all good, but is so fertile in all evils, that it cannot remain inactive." (Institutes.) Indeed, this

privation is not fully expressed by the phrase "the loss of original righteousness," unless that be meant to include in it the only source of righteousness in even the first man, the life which is imparted and supplied by the Holy Spirit. A similar want of explicitness we observe also in Calvin's own statement in his generally very able chapter on this subject, that Adam lost "the ornaments" he received from his Maker for us as well as for himself; unless we understand by these

original "ornaments" and "endowments" of human nature in him, the principle also, as above stated, from which they all flowed; and which, being forfeited, could no longer be imparted in the way of nature. For when the Spirit was restored to Adam, being pardoned, it was by grace and favor; and he could not impart it by natural descent to his posterity, though born of him when in a state of acceptance with God, since these influences are the gifts of God, which are imparted not by the first

but by the second Adam; not by nature, but by a free gift, to sinful and guilty man, the law being irreversible, "that which is born of the flesh is flesh."

Arminius, in the above quotation, has more forcibly and explicitly expressed that privation of which we speak, by the forfeiture "of the gift of the Holy Spirit" by Adam, for himself and his descendants, and the loss of original righteousness as the consequence.

This I take to be at once a simple and a Scriptural

view of the case. President Edwards, who well argues against the notion of the infusion of evil, perplexes his subject by his theory of "natural and supernatural principles," which the notes of Dr. Williams, his editor, who has introduced the peculiarities of his system of passive power, have not relieved. So far, certainly, both are right; the latter, that the creature cannot uphold itself, either physically or morally, without God; the former, that our natural passions and appetites can only be controlled by the higher

principles, which are "summarily comprehended in Divine love." But the power which upholds the rational creature in spiritual life is the Holy Spirit; and the source of these controlling supernatural powers, comprehended in "Divine," is also the Holy Spirit; from the loss of which all the depravation of man's nature proceeded.

This point may be briefly elucidated. The infliction of spiritual death, which we have already shown to be included in the original

sentence, consisted, of course, in the loss of spiritual life, which was that principle from which all right direction and control of the various powers and faculties of man flowed. But this spiritual life in the first man was not a natural effect, that is, an effect which would follow from his mere creation, independent of the vouchsafed influence of the Holy Spirit. This may be inferred from the "new creation," which is the renewal of man after the image of Him who at first

created him. This is the work of the Holy Spirit; but even after this change, this being "born again," man is not able to preserve himself in the renewed condition into which he is brought, but by the continuance of the same quickening and aiding influence.

No future growth in knowledge and experience; no power of habit, long persevered in, render him independent of the help of the Holy Spirit; he has rather, in proportion to his growth, a deeper consciousness of his need

of the indwelling of God, and of what the apostle calls his

"mighty working." The strongest aspirations of this new life is after communion and constant intercourse with God; and as that is the source of new strength, so this renewed strength expresses itself in a "cleaving unto the Lord," with a still more vigorous "purpose of heart." In a word, the sanctity of a Christian is dependent wholly upon the presence of the Sanctifier. We can only work out our own

salvation as "God worketh in us to will and to do."

This is the constant language of the New Testament; but if we are restored to what was lost by Adam, through the benefit brought to us by the second Adam; if there be any correspondency between the moral state of the regenerate man, and that of man before his fall, we do not speak of degree, but of substantial sameness of kind and quality; if love to God be in us what it was in him; if holiness, in its various branches, as it

flows from love, be in us what it was in him; we have sufficient reason to infer, that as they are supported in us by the influence of the Divine Spirit, they were so supported in him. Certain it is that before we are thus quickened by the Spirit, we are "dead in trespasses and sins;" and if we are made alive by that Spirit, it is a strong presumption that the withdrawing of that Spirit from Adam, when he willfully sinned, and from all his posterity, that is, from human nature itself, was the cause of the death

and the depravation which followed.

But this is not left to mere inference. For, as Mr. Howe justly observes, when speaking of "the retraction of God's Spirit from Adam," "This we do not say gratuitously; for do but consider that plain text, Gal. 3:13, 'Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree; that the blessing of Abraham might come upon us Gentiles, that we might receive the

promise of the Spirit through faith.' If the remission of the curse carry with it the conferring of the grace of the Spirit, then the curse, while it did continue; could not but include and carry in it the privation of the Spirit. This was part of the curse upon apostate Adam, the loss of God's Spirit. As soon as the law was broken, man was cursed, so as that thereby this Spirit should be withheld, should be kept off, otherwise than as upon the Redeemer's account, and according to his methods it should be

restored. Hereupon it could not but ensue that the Holy image of God must be erased and vanished." (Posthumous Work.) This accounts for the whole case of man's corruption. The Spirit's influence in him did not prevent the possibility of his sinning, though it afforded sufficient security to him, as long as he looked up to that source of strength. He did sin, and the Spirit retired; and, the tide of sin once turned in, the mound of resistance being removed, it overflowed his whole nature. In this state

of alienation from God men are born, with all these tendencies to evil, because the only controlling and sanctifying power, the presence of the Spirit, is wanting, and is now given to man, not as when first brought into being, as a creature; but is secured to him by the mercy and grace of a new and different dispensation, under which the Spirit is administered in different degrees, times, and modes, according to the wisdom of God, never on the ground of our being creatures, but as redeemed from the curse of the law

by him who be-came a curse for us.

A question, as to the transmission of this corruption of nature from parents to children, has been debated among those who, nevertheless, admit the fact; some contending that the soul is ex traduce; others, that it is by immediate creation. It is certain that, as to the meta-physical part of this question, we can come to no satisfactory conclusion. The Scriptures, however, appear to be more in favor of the doctrine of

traduction. "Adam begat a son in his own likeness." "That which is born of the flesh is flesh," which refers certainly to the soul as well as to the body. The fact also of certain dispositions and eminent faculties of the mind being often found in families appears to favor this notion; though it may be plausibly said, that, as the mind operates by bodily instruments, there may be a family constitution of the body, as there is of likeness, which may be more favorable to the excitement and

exertion of certain faculties than others.

The usual argument against this traduction of the human spirit is, that the doctrine of its generation tends to materialism. But this arises from a mistaken view of that in which the procreation of a human being lies, which does not consist in the production out of nothing of either of the parts of which the compounded being, man, is constituted, but in the uniting them substantially with one another. The

matter of the body is not, then, first made, but disposed, nor can it be supposed that the soul is by that act first produced. That belongs to a higher power; and then the only question is, whether all souls were created in Adam, and are transmitted by a law peculiar to themselves; which is always under the control of the will of that same watchful Providence, of whose constant agency in the production and ordering of the kinds, sexes, and circumstances of the animal creation, we

have abundant proof; or whether they are immediately created. The usual objection to the last notion is, that God cannot create an evil nature; but if our corruption is the result of privation, not of positive infection, the notion of the immediate creation of the soul is cleared of a great difficulty, though it is not wholly disentangled. But the tenet of the soul's descent appears to have most countenance from the language of Scripture, and it is no small confirmation of it, that when God designed to incarnate his

own Son, he stepped out of the ordinary course, and formed a sinless human nature immediately by the power of the Holy Ghost. The philosophical difficulties which have presented themselves to this opinion appear chiefly to have arisen from supposing that consciousness is an essential attribute of spirit; and that the soul is naturally immortal; the former of which cannot be proved, while the latter is contradicted by Scripture, which makes our immortality a gift

dependent on the will of the giver.

Other difficulties have arisen for want of considering the constant agency of God in regulating the production of all things, and of rational accountable creatures especially.

But whichever of these views is adopted, the soul and the body are united before birth, and man is born under that curse of the law which has deprived fallen human nature of the Spirit of God, who can only be restored by Christ. It is,

therefore, well and forcibly said by Calvin, - "to enable us to understand this subject, (man's birth in sin,) we have no need to enter on that tedious dispute, with which the fathers were not a little perplexed, whether the soul proceeds by derivation. We ought to be satisfied with this, that the Lord deposited with Adam the endowments he chose to confer upon human nature; and, therefore, that when he lost the favors he had received, he lost them not only for himself, but for us all. Who will be

solicitous about a transmission of the soul, when he hears, that Adam received the ornaments that he lost no less for us than for himself? that they were given, not to one man only, but to the whole human nature? There is nothing absurd, therefore, if, in consequence of his being spoiled of his dignities, that nature be now destitute and poor." (Institutes.) From this view of the total alienation of the nature of man from God, it does not, however, follow that there should be nothing virtuous and

praiseworthy among men, until, in the proper sense, they become the subjects of the regeneration insisted upon in the Gospel as necessary to qualify men for the kingdom of heaven. From the virtues which have existed among heathens, and from men being called upon to repent and believe the Gospel, it has been argued that human nature is not so entirely corrupt and disabled as the above representation would suppose; and, indeed, on the Calvinistic theory, which denies that all men

are interested in the benefits procured by the death of Christ, it would be extremely difficult for any to meet this objection, and to maintain their own views of the corruption of man with consistency. On the contrary theory of God's universal love nothing is easier; because, in consequence of the atonement offered for all, the Holy Spirit is administered to all, and to his secret operations all that is really spiritual and good, in its principle, is to be ascribed.

Independent of this influence, indeed, it may be conceived that there may be much restraint of evil, and many acts of external goodness in the world, without at all impugning the doctrine of an entire estrangement of the heart from God, and a moral death in trespasses and sins.

1. The understanding of man is, by its nature, adapted to perceive the evidence of demonstrated truth, and has no means of avoiding the conviction but

by turning away the attention. -

Wherever, then, revelations of the Divine law, or traditional remembrances of it are found, notions of right and wrong have been and must be found also.

2. So much of what is right and wrong is connected with the interests of men, that they have been led publicly to approve what is right in all instances, in all instances where it is obviously beneficial to society, and to disapprove of wrong. They do this by public laws, by their

writings, and by their censures of offenders. A moral standard of judging of vice and virtue has, therefore, been found every where, though varying in degree; which men have generally honestly applied to others in passing a judgment on their characters, though they have not used the same fidelity to themselves. More or less, therefore, the practice of what is condemned as vice or approved as virtue is shameful or creditable, and the interests and reputation of men require

that they obtain what is called a character, and preserve it; a circumstance which often serves to restrain vicious practices, and to produce a negative virtue, or an affectation of real and active virtue.

3. Though the seeds of sin lie hid in the heart of all, yet their full development and manifestation in action can only take place slowly and by the operation of exciting circumstances. Much of the evil in the world, also, lies in the irregularities of those natural appetites and the

excesses of those passions which are not in themselves evil, and such corrupt habits cannot be formed until after opportunities of frequent indulgence have been given. This will account for the comparative innocence of infancy, of youth, and of those around whom many guards have been thrown by providential arrangement.

4. We may notice, also, that it is not possible, were all men equally constituted as to their moral nature, that all sins should show

themselves in all men; and that although there is nothing in the proper sense, good in any, that society should present an unvarying mass of corruption, which some appear to think a necessary corollary from the doctrine of the universal corruption of human nature. Avarice, the strong desire of getting and of hoarding wealth, necessarily restrains from expensive vices, An obsequious and a tyrannical temper cannot co-exist in the same circumstances, and yet, in other circumstances, the

obsequious man is often found to be tyrannical, and the latter obsequious. Certain events excite a latent passion, such as ambition, and it becomes a master passion, to which all others are subordinated, and even vicious dis.

positions and habits controlled in order to success: just on the same principle that the ancient athlete (5) and our modern prize-fighters abstain from sensual indulgences, in order to qualify themselves for the combat; but who show, by the habits in

which they usually live, that particular vices are suspended only under the influence of a stronger passion. Perhaps, too, that love of country, that passion for its glory and aggrandizement, which produced so many splendid actions and characters among the Greeks and Romans, a circumstance which has been urged against the doctrine of man's depravity, may come under this rule. That it was not itself the result of a virtuous state of mind in, at least, the majority of cases, is clear from the frauds,

injustice, oppressions, cruelties, and avarice with which it was generally connected.

(5) "Qui studet optatam cursu contingere metam,

Multa tulit fecitque puer; sudavit et alsit;

Abstinuit venere, et vino." (Horace.)

5. It is a fact, too, which cannot be denied, that men have constitutional evil tendencies, some more powerfully bent to one vice, some to another. Whether it results from a different constitution of the mind

that the general corruption should act more powerfully in one direction in this man, and in another in that; or from the temperament of the body; or from some law impressed by God upon a sinful nature, (which it involves no difficulty to admit, inasmuch as society could scarcely have existed without that balance of evils and that check of one vice upon another which this circumstance produces,)-such is the fact; and it gives a reason for the existence of much negative virtue in society.

From all these causes, appearances of good among unregenerate men will present themselves, without affording any ground to deduct anything from those statements as to man's fallen state which have been just made; but these negative virtues, and these imitations of actions really good from interest, ambition, or honor, have no foundation in the fear of God, in a love to Virtue as such, in a right will, or in spiritual affections; and they afford, therefore, no evidence of spiritual life, or, in other words, of

religious principle. To other vices, to which there is any temptation, and to those now avoided, whenever the temptation comes, men uniformly yield; and this shows, that though the common corruption varies its aspects, it is, nevertheless, unrelieved by a real virtuous principle in any, so far as they are left to themselves.

But virtues grounded on principle, though an imperfect one, and therefore neither negative nor simulated, may also be

found among the unregenerate, and have existed, doubtless, in all ages.

These, however, are not from man, but from God, whose Holy Spirit has been vouchsafed to "the world" through the atonement. This great truth has often been lost sight of in this controversy.

Some Calvinists seem to acknowledge it substantially, under the name of "common grace;"

others choose rather to refer all appearances of

virtue to nature, and thus, by attempting to avoid the doctrine of the gift of the Spirit to all mankind, attribute to nature what is inconsistent with their opinion of its entire corruption, But there is, doubtless, to be sometimes found in men not yet regenerate in the Scripture sense, not even decided in their choice, something of moral excellence, which cannot be referred to any of the causes above adduced; and of a much higher character than is to be attributed to a nature which, when left to itself, is

wholly destitute of spiritual life. Compunction for sin, strong desires to be freed from its tyranny, such a fear of God as preserves them from many evils, charity, kind-ness, good neighborhood, general respect for goodness and good men, a lofty sense of honor and justice, and, indeed, as the very command issued to them to repent and believe the Gospel in order to their salvation implies, a power of consideration, prayer, and turning to God, so as to commence that course which, persevered in,

would lead on to forgiveness and regeneration. To say that all these are to be attributed to mere nature, is to surrender the argument to the semi-Pelagian, who contends that these are proofs that man is not wholly degenerate. They are to be attributed to the controlling influence of the Holy Spirit; to his incipient workings in the hearts of men; to the warfare which he there maintains, and which has sometimes a partial victory, before the final triumph comes, or

when, through the fault of man, through "resisting," "grieving," "vexing," "quenching" that Holy Spirit, that final triumph may never come. It is thus that one part of Scripture is reconciled to another, and both to fact; the declaration of man's total corruption, with the presumption of his power to return to God, to repent, to break off his sins, which all the commands and invitations to him from the Gospel imply: and thus it is that we understand how, especially in Christian countries, where the Spirit

is more largely effused, there is so much more general virtue than in others; and in those circles especially, in which Christian education, and the prayers of the pious, and the power of example are applied and exhibited.

The Scriptural proof that the Spirit is given to "the world" is obvious and decisive. We have seen that the curse of the law implied a denial of the Spirit; the removal of that curse implies, therefore, the gift of the Spirit, and the benefit must be as large

and extensive as the atonement.

Hence we find the Spirit's operations spoken of, not only as to the good, but the wicked, in all the three dispensations. In the patriarchal," the Spirit strove with men;" with the antediluvian race, before and all the time the ark was preparing. The Jews in the wilderness are said to have "vexed his Holy Spirit;" Christ promises to send the Spirit to convince the world of sin; and the book of God's Revelations concludes by representing

the Spirit as well as the Bride, the Holy Ghost as well as the Church in her ordinances, inviting all to come and take of the water of life freely. All this is the fruit of our redemption and the new relation in which man is placed to God; as a sinner, it is true, still; hut a sinner for whom atonement has been made, and who is to be wooed and won to an acceptance of the heavenly mercy. Christ having been made a curse for us, the curse of the law no longer shuts out that Spirit from us; nor can justice exclaim against this

going forth of the Spirit, as it has been beautifully expressed, "to make gentle trials upon the spirits of men;" to inject some beams of light, to inspire contrite emotions, which, if they comply with, may lead on to those more powerful and effectual. If, however, they rebel against them, and oppose their sensual imaginations and desires to the secret promptings of God's Spirit, they ultimately provoke him to withdraw his aid, and they relapse into a state more guilty and dangerous. Again and again they are

visited in various ways, in honor of the Redeemer's atonement, and for the manifestation of the long suffering of God. In some the issue is life; in others, an aggravated death; but in most cases this struggle, this "striving with man," this debating with him, this standing between him and death, cannot fail to correct and prevent much evil, to bring into existence some "goodness," though it may be as the morning cloud and the early dew, and to produce civil and social virtues, none of which however, are to be placed

to the account of nature, nor used to soften our views of its entire alienation from God; but are to be acknowledged at magnifying that grace which regards the whole of the sinning race with compassion, and is ever employed in seeking and saving that which is lost.

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39 REDEMPTION - PRINCIPLES OF GOD'S MORAL GOVERNMENT

We have established it as the doctrine of Holy Scripture, that all men are born with a corrupted nature, that from this nature rebellion against the Divine authority universally flows, and that, in consequence, the whole world is, as St. Paul forcibly expresses it, "guilty before God."

Before any issue proceeded from the first pair, they were restored to the Divine

favor. Had no method of forgiveness and restoration been established with respect to human offenders, the penalty of death must have been forthwith executed upon them, there being no doubt of the fact of their delinquency, and no reason, in that case, for delaying their punishment; and with, and in them, the human race must have utterly perished. The covenant of pardon and salvation which was made with Adam, did not, however, terminate upon

him; but comprehended all his race.

This is a point made indubitable by those passages we have already quoted from the Apostle Paul, in which he contrasts the injury which the human race have received from the disobedience of Adam, with the benefit brought to them by the obedience of Jesus Christ. "For if, through the offence of one, many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto

many." "Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life."

Since, then, the penalty of death was not immediately executed in all its extent upon the first sinning pair, and is not immediately executed upon their sinning descendants; since they were actually restored to the Divine favor, and the same blessing is offered to us, our inquiries must next

be directed to the nature and reason of that change in the conduct of the Divine Being, in which he lays aside, in so great a mea-sure, the sternness and inflexibility of his office of Judge, and becomes the dispenser of grace and favor to the guilty themselves, The existence of a Divine law, obligatory upon man, is not doubted by any who admit the existence and government of God. We have already seen its requirements, its extent, and its sanctions, and have proved that its penalty

consists not merely of severe sufferings in this life; but in death, that is, the separation of the body and the soul, - the former being left under the power of corruption, the other being separated from God, and made liable to punishment in another state of being.

It is important to keep in view the fact of the extent and severity of the punishment denounced against all transgressions of the law of God, because this is illustrative of the character of God; both with

reference to his essential holiness and to his proceedings as Governor of the world.

The miseries connected with sin, as consequences affecting the transgressor himself and society, and the afflictions, personal and national, which are the results of Divine visitation, must all be regarded as punitive. Corrective effects may be secondarily connected with them, but primarily, they must all be punitive. It would be abhorrent to all our notions of the Divine character, to

suppose perfectly innocent beings subject to such miseries; and they are only, therefore, to be accounted for on the ground of their being the results of a supreme judicial administration, which bears a strict, and often a very terrible character. If, to the sufferings and death which result from offences in the present life, we add the future punishment of the wicked, we shall be the more impressed with the depth and breadth of that impress of justice which marks the character and the government of God.

Say that this punishment is that of loss, loss of the friendship and presence of God, and all the advantages which must result from that immediate intercourse with him which is promised to righteous persons; and that this loss, which, confessedly, must be unspeakably great, is eternal; even then it must follow that the turpitude of moral delinquency is regarded by our Divine Legislator and Judge as exceedingly mighty and aggravated. But when to the punishment of loss in a future life, we add that of

pain, which all the representations of this subject in Scripture certainly establish, whether they are held to be expressed in literal or in figurative phrase; to which pain also the all-impressive circumstance of eternity is to be added; then is our sense of the guilt and deserving of human offence against God, according to the principles of the Divine law, raised, if not to a full conception of the evil of sin, (for as we cannot measure the punishment, we cannot measure the quality of the offence,) yet

to a standard of judging, which may well warrant the Scriptural exclamation, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

These premises are unquestionable, if any respect is paid to the authority of Scripture, and, indeed, God's severity against moral offence is manifested, as to this present life, by facts of universal observation and uninterrupted history, quite independent of Scripture. But it is to the testimony of God himself,

in his own word, that we must resort for the most important illustrations of the Divine character, and especially of its holiness and justice.

With respect to the former, they show us that holiness in God is more than a mere absence of moral evil; more than approval, and even delight in moral goodness; more than simple aversion and displeasure at what is contrary to it. They prove, that the holiness of God is so intense, that whatever is opposed to it is the object of an active displacence, of

hatred, of opposition, and resistance, and that this sentiment is inflexible and eternal. Agreeably to this, God is, in Scripture, said to be "of purer eyes than to behold iniquity" - and we are taught that "the thoughts of the wicked are an abomination" to him.

With respect to the justice of God, it is necessary that we should enter into a larger view, since a right conception of that attribute of the Divine nature lies at the foundation of the Christian doctrine of atonement.

Justice is usually considered as universal or particular. Universal justice, or righteousness, includes holiness, and, indeed, comprehends all the moral attributes of God, all the Divine virtues of every kind. - Particular justice is either commutative, which respects equals; or distributive, which is the dispensing of rewards and punishments, and is exercised only by governors. It is the justice of God in this last view, but still in connection with universal justice, with

which we are now concerned; that rectoral sovereign justice by which he maintains his own rights, and the rights of others, and gives to everyone his due according to that legal constitution which he has himself established. And as this legal constitution under which he has placed his creatures, is the result of universal justice or righteousness, the holiness, goodness, truth, and wisdom of God united; so his distributive justice, or his respect to the laws which he has himself

established, is, in every respect and degree, faultless and perfect. In this legal constitution, no rights are mistaken or misstated; and nothing is enjoined or prohibited, nothing promised or threatened but what is exactly conformable to the universal righteousness or absolute moral perfection of God. This is the constant doctrine of Scripture; this the uniform praise bestowed upon the Divine law, that it is, in every respect, conformable to abstract truth, purity, holiness, and justice, and is

itself truth, purity, holiness, and justice. "The statutes of the Lord are eight, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether,"

Psalm 19:8, 9. "The law is holy, and the commandment holy, just, and good," Rom. 7:12.

Of the strictness and severity of the punitive justice of God, the sentence of death, which we have

already seen to be pronounced upon "sin," and, therefore, upon all transgressions of God's law, for "sin is the transgression of the law," is sufficient evidence; and the actual infliction of death, as to the body, is the standing proof to the world, that the threatening is not a dead letter, and that in the Divine administration continual and strict regard is had to the claims and dispensations of distributive justice. On the other hand, as this distributive justice emanates from the entire

holiness and moral rectitude of the Divine nature, it is established, by this circumstance, that the severity does not go beyond the equity of the case; and that, to the full extent of that punishment which may be inflicted in another life, and which is, therefore, eternal, there is nothing which is contrary to the full and complete moral perfection of God, to his goodness, holiness, truth, and justice united; but that it is fully agreeable to them all, and is, indeed, the result of the perfect

existence of such attributes in the Divine nature.

The Scriptures, therefore, are frequently exceedingly emphatic in ascribing a perfect righteousness to the judicial and penal visitations of sinful individuals and nations; and. that not merely with reference to such visitations being conformable to the penalties threatened in the Divine law itself, in which case the righteousness would consist in their not exceeding the penalty threatened; but, more

abstractedly considered, in their very nature, and with reference to even the highest standard of righteousness and holiness. "Shall not the Judge of the whole earth do RIGHT?" "It is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you," 2 Thess. 1:6, - "The day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God," Rom.

2:5. "Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments," Rev. 16:7.

The legal constitution then, which we are under, secures life to the obedient, but dooms offenders to die. It is the office of distributive justice to execute this penalty, as well as to bestow the reward of obedience; and the appointment of the penalty and the execution of it, are both the results of the essential rectitude of God.

This is most obvious as the doctrine of Scripture; but have we any means of discerning the connection between the essential

justice or universal righteousness of God, and such a constitution of law and government as, in the first instance, ordains so severe a penalty against sin as death, maintains it unchangeably through all the generations of time, and carries it into eternity? This is an important question, not without its difficulties, and yet it may not altogether elude our inquiries. Whether we succeed or not in discovering this connection, the fact remains the same, firmly grounded on the most

explicit testimony of God in his own word. It is, however, an inquiry worthy our attention.

The creation of beings capable of choice, and endowed with affections, seems necessarily to have involved the possibility of volitions and acts contrary to the will of the Creator, and, consequently, it involved a liability to misery. To prevent this, both justice and benevolence were concerned. Justice, seeing that the Creator has an absolute right to the entire

obedience of the creatures he has made, and all opposition to that will is the violation of a right, and the practice of a wrong which justice is bound to prevent. Benevolence, because this opposition to the will of God, which will is the natural law of a creature, must be the source of misery to the offender, and that independent of direct punishment. This is manifest. Some end was proposed in creation, or it could not have been a work of wisdom; the felicity of the creature must also have

been proposed as an end, either principal or subordinate, or creation could not have been a display of goodness; a capacity and power of holiness must also have been' imparted to moral agents, or, in a moral nature, every act would have been morally corrupt, and, therefore, the creature must have been constantly displeasing to the holy God, and not "very good," as all his works, including man, were pronounced to be at the beginning. The end proposed in the forming of intelligent

creatures could only be answered by their continual compliance with the will of God. This implied both the power and the exercise of holiness, and with that the felicity of the creature was necessarily connected. It was adapted to a certain end, and in attaining that its happiness was secured. To be disobedient was to set itself in opposition to God, to exist and act for ends contrary to the wisdom and holiness of God, and was, therefore, to frustrate his benevolent intentions also as to its

happiness, and to become miserable from its very hostility to God, and the disorder arising from the misapplication of the powers with which it had been endowed. To prevent all these evils, and to secure the purposes for which creative power was exerted, were the ends, therefore, of that administration which arose out of the existence of moral agents. This rule takes date from their earliest being. No sooner did they exist, than a Divine government was established over them; and

to the ends just mentioned all its acts must have been directed.

The first act was the publication of the will or law of God, for where there is no declared law there is no rational government. The second act was to give motives to obedience, for to creatures liable to evil, though created good, these were necessary; but as they were made free, and designed to yield a willing service, more than motives, that is rational inducements, operating through the judgment and

affections, could not be applied to induce obedience;-

external force or necessary impulse could have no place in the government of such creatures.

The promise of the continuance of a happy and still improving life comprehended one class of motives to obedience; the real justice of yielding obedience another. But was no motive arising from fear also to be applied? There was much to be feared from the very nature of things; from the misery

which, in the way of natural and necessary consequence alone, must follow from opposition to the will of God, and the willful corrupting of a nature created upright. Now, since this was what the creature was liable to, the administration of the Divine government would have been obviously defective, had this been concealed by him, who had himself established that natural order, by which disobedience to the will of God, in a moral being, should be followed by certain misery, and he

would apparently have been chargeable with not having used every means, consistent with free agency, to prevent so fatal a result. So far we conceive that this is indubitable.

But now let us suppose that nothing less than a positive penalty, of the most tremendous kind, could be a sufficient motive to deter these free and rational beings from transgression; that, even that threatened penalty itself, though the greatest possible evil, would not, in all cases, be sufficient; but that, in none

a less powerful motive would prove sufficiently cautionary; then, in such circumstances, the moral perfection of the Divine nature, his universal rectitude and benevolence, would undoubtedly require the ordination of that penalty, however tremendous.

The case might be a choice between the universal disobedience of all, and their being left to the miseries which follow from sin by natural consequence; and the preservation of some,

perhaps the majority, though the guilty remainder should not only be punished by the misery which is the natural result of vice; but, in addition, should be subject to that positive penalty of death, which, as to the soul, runs on with immortality, and is, therefore, eternal.

On such an alternative as this, which may surely be conceived possible, and which contradicts no attribute of God, does the essential justice or rectitude of the Divine nature demand that such a

penalty should be adopted? The affirmative of this question will be supported, I think, by the following considerations:-

1. The holiness of God, which, as we have seen, is so intense as to abhor and detest every kind and degree of moral evil, would, from its very nature, its active and irreconcilable opposition to evil, determine to the adoption of the most effectual means of preventing its introduction among the rational beings which should be created, and,

when introduced, of checking and limiting its progress, So that, in proportion to that aversion, must be his propension to adopt the most effectual means to deter his creatures from it; and if nothing less than such a penalty could be effectual, even in the majority of cases, then it resulted necessarily, from the holiness of God, that the penalty of death, in all its Scriptural extent, should be attached to transgression.

2. The consideration of the essential justice or

rectitude of God, that principle which leads to an unchangeable respect to what is right and equitably fit, leads to the same conclusion. God has his own rights as maker, and, therefore, proprietor and Lord of all creatures, and it is fit they should be maintained and vindicated. To surrender them, or unsteadily and uncertainly to assert them, would be an encouragement to evil, and his very regard to mere abstract right and moral fitness must, therefore, be considered as determining God to a steady and

unchangeable assertion of his rights, since their surrender could present no end worthy of his character, or consistent with his holiness. But wherever more created beings exist than one, the rights of others also come into consideration; both the indirect right of a dependent creature under government, to be protected, as far as may be, from the contagion of bad example, and the more direct right of protection from those injuries which many sins do, in their own nature, imply. For no man

can be ambitious, unjust, &c, without inflicting injury upon others. The essential rectitude of God was concerned, therefore, to regard these rights in the creatures dependent upon him, and to adopt such a legal constitution and mode of government, under which to place them, as should respect the maintenance of his own rights of sovereignty, and the righteous claims which his creatures, that is the general society of created beings, had upon him. All this, it maybe said, only proves that the essential

rectitude of God required that such a government should be adopted as should inflict some marked penalty on offences. It proves this, but it proves more, namely, that the Divine rectitude required that the most effectual means should be adopted to uphold these rights, both as they existed primarily in God, and secondarily in his creatures. This must follow: for if there was any obligation to uphold them at all, it was an obligation to up-hold them in the most effectual manner, since, if ineffectual means

only had been adopted, when more effectual means were at hand, a willful abandonment of those rights would have been implied. If, therefore, there were no means equally effectual for these purposes as the issuing of a law, accompanied by a sanction of death as its penalty, the essential rectitude of God required its adoption.

3. The same may be said of the Divine goodness and wisdom, for, as the former is tenderly disposed to preserve all sentient creatures from misery, so

the latter would, of necessity, adopt the most effectual means of counteracting moral evil, which is the only source of misery in the creation of God.

The whole question, then, depends on this, whether the penalty of death, as the punishment of sin, be the most effectual means of accomplishing this end; the answer to which is, to all who believe the Bible, that as this has actually been adopted as the universal penalty of transgressing the Divine law, (see chapter

xviii,) and as this is confessedly the highest possible penalty, nothing less than this could be effectual to the purpose of government, and to the manifestation of the Divine holiness and rectitude. If it could, then a superfluous and excessive means has been adopted, for which no reason can be given, and which impeaches the wisdom of God, the office of which attribute it is to adapt means to ends by an exact adjustment; if not, then it was required by all the moral attributes of the

Divine nature to which we have referred.

The next question will be whether, since, as the result of the moral perfection of God, a legal constitution has been established among rational creatures which accords life to obedience, and denounces death against transgression, the justice of God obliges, to the execution of the penalty; or whether we have any reason to conclude, that the rights of God are in many, or in all cases, relaxed, and punishment

remitted. All the opponents of the doctrine of atonement strenuously insist upon this; and argue, first, that God has an unquestionable power of giving up his own rights, and pardoning sin on prerogative, without any compensation whatever; second, that when repentance succeeds to offence, there is a moral fitness in forgiveness, since the person offending presents an altered and reformed character; and finally, that the very affections of goodness and mercy, so eminent in the

Divine character, require us to conclude that he is always ready, upon repentance, to forgive the delinquencies of all his creatures, or, at most, to make their punishments light and temporary.

In the first of these arguments, it is contended that God may give up his own rights. This must mean either his right to obedience from his creatures, or his right to punish disobedience, when that occurs. With respect to God's right to be obeyed, nothing can be more

obvious than that the perfect rectitude of his nature forbids him to give up or to relax that right at all, No king can morally give up his right to be obeyed in the full degree which may be enjoined by the laws of his kingdom. No parent can give up his right to obedience, in things lawful, from his children, and be blameless. In both cases, if this be done voluntarily, it argues an indifference to that principle of rectitude on which such duties depend, and, therefore, a moral imperfection. Now this

cannot be attributed to God, and, therefore, he never can yield up his right to be obeyed, which is both agreeable to abstract rectitude, and is, moreover, for the benefit of the creature himself, as the contrary would be necessarily injurious to him. But may he not give up his right to punish, when disobedience has actually taken place? Only, it is manifest, where he would not appear by this to give up his claim to obedience, which would be a winking at offence; and where he has not

absolutely bound himself to punish. But neither of these can occur here. It is only by punitive acts that the Supreme Governor makes it manifest that he stands upon his right to be obeyed, and that he will not relax it. If no punishment ensue, then it must follow, that that right is given up. From the same principle that past offences are regarded with impunity, it would also follow, that all future ones might be overlooked in like manner, and thus government would be abrogated, and the obligation of subjection

to God be, in effect, cancelled. If, again, impunity were confined to a few offenders, then would there be partiality in God; if it were extended to all, then would he renounce his sovereignty, and show himself indifferent to that love of rectitude which is the characteristic of a holy being, and to that moral order, which is the character of a righteous governor. But, in addition to this, we have already seen that, by a formal law, punishment is actually threatened, and that in the extreme, and in all cases of

transgression whatever. Now, from this, it follows, that nothing less than the attachment of such a penalty to transgression was determined by the wisdom of God to be sufficient to uphold the authority of his laws among his creatures; that even this security, in all instances, would not deter them from sin; and, therefore, that a less awful sanction would have been wholly inadequate to the case. If so, then not to exact the penalty is to repeal the law, to reduce its sanction to an empty threat, unworthy the

veracity of God, and to render it altogether inert, inasmuch as it would be soon discovered whether sin were followed by punishment or not. This is a principle so fully recognized in human governments, that their laws have generally defined the measure of punishment, and the fact being proved, the punishment follows as a thing of course in the regular order of administration. It is true, that a power of pardon is generally lodged with the prince; but the reason of

this is, the imperfection which must necessarily cleave to all human institutions, so that there may be circumstances in the offence which the law could not provide against; or there may be an expediency or reason of state which supposes some compromise of strict principle, some weakness on the part of the sovereign power, some desire to disarm resentment, or to obtain popularity, or to gratify some powerful interest. But these are the exceptions, not the rule; for, in general, the supreme

power proceeds calmly and firmly in the exercise of punitive justice, in order to maintain the authority of the laws, and to deter others from offending. Now none of those imperfections, or sinister interests, which interfere to produce these exceptions, can have any place in the Divine government; and, even if it could be proved, that, in some special cases, exceptions might occur in the administration of God, yet this would not meet the case of those who would establish the hope of pardon in behalf of

offending men, upon the prerogative of God to relax his own rights and to remit punishment, since what is required is to prove that there is a general rule of pardon, not a few special cases of exemption from the denounced penalty. It may, therefore, be confidently concluded, that there is no relaxation of right in the Divine administration, and no forgiveness of sin by the exercise of mere prerogative.

The notion which has been added to this, that

repentance, on the part of the offender, places him in a new relation, and renders him a fit object of pardon, will be found equally fallacious.

This argument assumes that, in a case of impenitence, the moral fitness which is supposed to present itself, in the case of penitents, to claim the exercise of forgiveness! does not exist, and, therefore, that it would be morally unfit, that is, wrong, to exercise it. This is, indeed, expressly conceded by Socinus, who

says, that not to give pardon, in case of impenitence, is due to the rectitude and equity of God. (6) It follows, then, that the principle before stated, that the prerogative of God enables him to forgive sin, must be given up by all who hold that it is only when repentance takes place, that a moral fitness is created for the exercise of this act of grace.

Upon their own showing, sin is not, and cannot, consistently with rectitude, be forgiven by a voluntary surrender of right, or from

mere compassion; but, in order to make this an act of moral fitness, that is, a right and proper proceeding, some consideration must be presented, independent of the misery to which the offender has exposed himself, and which misery is the object of pity; something which shall make it right, as well as merciful in God to forgive. Those who urge that repentance is this consideration, do thus, unwittingly, give up their own principle, and tacitly adopt that of the

satisfactionists differing only as to what does actually constitute it right in God to for-give. But the sufficiency of mere repentance to constitute a moral fitness in forgiveness, all who consider the death of Christ as a necessary atonement for sin, do, of course, deny; and there are, indeed, many considerations suggested to us by turning to our true guide, the Scriptures, wholly unfavorable to this opinion.

(6) "Non resipiscentibus veniam non concedere, id demum naturae divinae, et decretis ejus, et propterea rectitudini, et equitati debitum est ac consentaneum." (Socin. de Servat.) In the first place, we find no intimation in them that the penalty of the law is not to be executed in case of repentance:- certainly there was none given in the promulgation of the law to Adam; there is none in the Decalogue; none in any of those passages in the Old and New Testament which speak of the legal

consequences of sin, as "that the wages of sin is death;" "the soul that sinneth it shall die," &c. Repentance is enjoined, both in the Old and New Testaments, it is true, but then it is in connection with a system of atonement and satisfaction, independent of repentance; with sacrifices under the Mosaic institution, and with the death and redemption of Christ under the new covenant. In both, something more is referred to, as the means of human recovery, beside repentance, and of which,

indeed, repentance itself is represented as an eject and fruit. Wherever the Divine Being and his creatures are regarded simply in their legal relation, one as governor, the other as subjects, there is certainly no such qualification of the threatenings of his violated law, as to warrant any one to expect remission of punishment upon repentance.

2. It is not true, that repentance changes, as they urge, the legal relation of the guilty to God whom they have offended. They

are offenders still, though penitent. The sentence of the law is directed against transgression, and repentance does not annihilate, but, on the contrary, acknowledges the fact of that transgression. The charge lies against the offender; he may be an obdurate or a penitent criminal; but, in either case, he is equally criminal of all for which he stands truly charged, and how then can his relation to the lawgiver be changed by repentance? In the nature of the thing, nothing but pardon can change that

relation; for nothing but pardon can cancel crime, and it is clear that repentance is not pardon.

3. So far from repentance producing this change of relation, and placing men in the same situation as though they had never offended, we have proofs to the contrary, both from the Scriptures and from the established course of providence. For the first, though men are now under a dispensation of grace, yet, after long-continued obstinacy and refusal of grace, the Scriptures

represent repentance as incapable of turning away the coming vengeance. "Because I have called and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded;- When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction as a whirlwind, when distress and anguish cometh upon you; then shall they call upon me but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me." Here, to call upon God, and to seek him early, that is, earnestly and carefully, are acts of repentance and

reformation too, and yet they have no effect in changing the relation of the guilty to God, their judge, and they are proceeded against for their past offences, which, according to the theory of the Socinians, they ought not to be. The course of providence in this life, is, also, in opposition to the notion of the efficacy of mere repentance to arrest punishment. For, as Bishop Butler has so well shown, (Analogy of Natural and Revealed Religion,] the sufferings which follow sin in this present life by

natural consequence and the established constitution of things, are as much the effect of God's appointment as the direct penalties attached by him to the violation of his laws; and though they may differ in degree, that does not affect the question. Whether the punishment be of long or of short duration, inflicted in the present state or in the next, if the justice or benevolence of God requires that punishment should not be inflicted, when repentance has taken place, it cannot be inflicted consistently with those

attributes in any degree whatever. But repentance does not prevent these penal consequences- repentance does not restore health injured by intemperance, property wasted by profusion, or character dishonored by an evil practice. The moral administration under which we are, therefore, shows that indemnity is not necessarily the effect of repentance in the present life, and we have, consequently, no reason to conclude that it will be so in another.

4. The true nature of repentance, as it is stated in the Scriptures, seems entirely to have been overlooked or disregarded by those who contend that repentance is a reason for the non-execution of the penalty of the law. It is either a sorrow for sin, merely because of the painful consequences to which it has exposed the offender, unless forgiven, or it arises from a perception also of the evil of sin, and a dislike to it as such, with real remorse and sorrow, that the authority of God has been

slighted, and his goodness abused. Now if, by repentance, is meant repentance in the former sense, then to give pardon on such a condition would be tantamount to the entire and absolute repeal of all law, and the annihilation of all government, since every criminal, when convicted, and finding himself in immediate danger of punishment, would as necessarily repent as he would necessarily be sorry to be liable to pain; and this sorrow being, in that case, repentance, it would in all cases, according to

this doctrine, render it morally fit and right that forgiveness should be exercised, and, consequently, wrong that it should be refused. In no case, therefore, could the penalty of the law be, in any degree, enforced.

But if repentance be taken in the second sense, and this is certainly the light in which true repentance is exhibited in the Scriptures, then it is forgotten that such is the corrupt state of man, that he is incapable of penitence of this kind. This follows from that view of

human depravity which we have already established from the Scriptures, and which we need not repeat. In conformity with this view of the entire corruptness of man's nature, therefore, repentance is said to be the gift of Christ, who, in consequence of being exalted to be a Prince and a Savior, "gives repentance," as well as "remission of sins," a gift quite superfluous, if to repent truly were in the power of man, and independent of Christ. To suppose man to be capable of a repentance,

which is the result of genuine principle, is to assume human nature to be what it is not. The whole rests on this question: for, if man be totally corrupt, the only principles from which that repentance and correction of manners, which are supposed in the argument, can flow, do not exist in his nature; and if we allow no more than that the propensity to evil in him is stronger than the propensity to good, it would be absurd to suppose that in opposing propensities, the weaker

should ever resist the more powerful.

But take it that repentance, in the best interpretation, is possible to fallen, unassisted man, and that it is actually exercised and followed even by a better conduct, still in no good sense can it be shown, that this would make it morally right and fit in the Supreme Being to forgive offences against his government. Socinus, we have seen in the above quotation, allows that it would not be right, not consistent with God's

moral attributes to forgive the impenitent; and all, indeed, who urge repentance as the sole condition of pardon, adopt the same principle; but how, then, does it appear that, to grant pardon upon repentance is right, that is, just in itself, or a manifestation of a just and righteous government?

If right be taken in the sense of moral fitness, its lowest sense, the moral correspondence of one thing with another, it cannot be morally fit in a perfectly holy being to be

so indifferent to offences, as not to express, toward the offenders, any practical displeasure of any kind; yet this the argument supposes, since the slightest infliction of punishment, should repentance take place, would be contrary to the principle assumed. If justice be taken in the sense of giving to everyone what is due, the Divine Being cannot be just in this sense, should he treat an offender, though afterward penitent, precisely as he treats those who have persevered in obedience,

without defect of any kind; and yet, if repentance be pleaded as a moral reason for entirely overlooking offence, then will all be treated alike, whether obedient or the contrary, But finally, if the justice of God be considered with reference to government, the impossibility of exonerating a penitent offender, and the upholding of a righteous administration is most apparent. That we are under government is certain; that we are under a settled law is equally so, and that law explains to us

the nature of the government by which we are controlled. In all the statements made respecting this government in Scripture, the government of earthly sovereigns and magistrates is the shadow under which it is represented, and the one is the perfect model after which the other has been imperfectly framed. Nothing that is said of God being a father, is ever adduced to lower his claims as Lord, or to diminish the reverence and fear of his creatures toward him under that character. The

penalty of transgression is death. This is too plainly written in the Scriptures to be, for a moment, denied, and if it were righteous to attach that penalty to offence, it is most certainly righteous to execute it; and, therefore, administrative justice cannot be maintained if it be not executed. As to the impenitent, this, indeed, is conceded; but penitence makes no difference; for, if the end of attaching this penalty to offence, was to maintain the authority of the law, then not to execute it upon the repentant

would still be to annul that authority. This repentance is either in the power of the transgressor, or it is not. If the former, he will always be disposed to exercise it, when the danger approaches, rather than die; and so he may sin as often as he pleases, and yet have it always in his own power to turn aside the punishment, which amounts to a substantive repeal of the law and the abrogation of all government. If, on the other hand, the production of a penitent disposition is not in his own power, and

can only come from above, as a matter of grace, it is a strange anomaly to suppose a government so established as to oblige the governor to concur in producing repentance in those who despise his authority, so that they may avoid punishment. This would be grace, and not law, most emphatically; for, if the governor were bound by any principle of any kind to produce this sentiment of repentance in order to constitute a moral fitness in the exercise of pardon, he would, for anything we can see, be

bound by it, to use the same means to render all penitent, that all might escape punishment, and to do this, too, as often as they fell into sin, that punishment might, in no case, follow, except when the means employed by him for that purpose were obstinately resisted; and thus repentance would be brought in as the substitute of obedience. But since the end of law is to command obedience, and it is invested with authority for the purpose of effecting that, it ceases to answer the purpose for which it was

established, when it accepts repentance in the place of obedience.

This is not its end, as an instrument of moral government; nor is it a means to its proper end, which is obedience; for repentance can give no security for future obedience, since a penitent transgressor, whose nature is infected with a corrupt moral principle and habit, is much more liable to sin again than when innocent, as in his first estate; and, as this scheme makes no provision at all for the

moral cure of man's fallen nature by the renewing influences of the Holy Spirit, so it abolishes all law as an instrument of moral order, and substitutes pardon as an end of government instead of obedience.

With this view of the insufficiency of repentance to obtain pardon the Scriptures agree; for not, now, to advert to the doctrine of the Old Testament, which will be subsequently considered, we need only refer to the Gospel, which is

professedly a declaration of the mercy of God to sinning men, and which also professedly lays down the means by which the pardon of their offences is to be attained. Without entering at all into other subjects connected with this, it is enough here to show that, in the Gospel, pardon is not connected with mere repentance, as it must have been, had the doctrine, against which we have contended, been true. John the Baptist was emphatically a preacher of repentance, and, had nothing but mere

repentance been required in order to salvation, he would have been the most successful of preachers. So numerous were the multitudes which submitted to the power of his ministry, that the largest terms are used by the Evangelist Matthew to express the effect produced by it, - "Then went out all Judea, and all Jerusalem, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins." Of the truth of their repentance, no doubt is expressed. On the contrary,

when John excepts only "many of the Sadducees and Pharisees" who came "to his baptism" as hypocrites, we are bound to conclude, that he, who appears to have had the supernatural gift of discovering the spirits of men, allowed the repentance of the rest generally to be genuine. It would follow, then, from the principle laid down by the adversaries of the doctrine of the atonement of Christ, namely, that repentance alone renders it morally fit in God to forgive sin, and that,

therefore, he can require nothing else but true repentance in order to pardon, that the disciples of the Baptist needed not to look for anything beyond what their master was the instrument of imparting by his ministry. But this is contradicted by the fact. He taught them to look for a higher baptism, that of the Holy Ghost; and to a more effectual teacher, the Christ, whose voice or herald he was; all he did and said bore upon it a preparatory character, and to this character he was most careful to give the

utmost distinctness, that his hearers might not be mistaken. To two of his disciples, standing with him when "he looked upon Jesus as he walked," he said, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world;" and thus he confessed that it was not himself, nor his doctrine, nor the repentance which it produced, which took away sin; but that it was taken away by Christ alone, and that in his sacrificial character, as "the Lamb of God." Nay what, indeed, is still more explicit, he himself declares, that

everlasting life was not attained by the repentance which he preached, but by believing on Christ; for he concludes his discourse concerning Jesus (John 3:25, 36) with these memorable words, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." The testimony of John was, therefore, that more than repentance, even faith in Christ, was necessary to salvation. Such also was the doctrine of our Lord himself, though he, too,

was a preacher of repentance; and that of the apostles, who, proclaiming that "all men everywhere" should repent, not less explicitly preached that all men everywhere should believe; and that they were "justified by faith," and thus had "peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

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40 REDEMPTION - DEATH OF CHRIST PROPITIATORY

These points, then, being so fully established, that sin is neither forgiven by the mere prerogative of God, nor upon the account of mere repentance in man, we proceed to inquire into the Scripture account of the real consideration on which the execution of the penalty of transgression is delayed, and the offer of forgiveness is made to offenders.

To the statements of the New Testament we shall

first direct our attention, and then point out that harmony of doctrine on this subject which pervades the whole Scriptures, and makes both the Old and New Testament give their agreeing testimony to that one method of love, wisdom, and justice, by which a merciful God justifies the ungodly.

1. The first thing which strikes every attentive, and, indeed, every cursory reader of the New Testament, must be, that the pardon of our sin, and our entire salvation, is

ascribed to the death of Christ. We do not, now, inquire in what sense his death availed to these great results; but we, at present, only state that, in some sense, our salvation is expressly and emphatically connected with that event. "I lay down my life for the sheep." "He gave himself for us." He died, "the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many."

"While we were yet sinners Christ died for us." "In whom we have redemption

through his blood, the forgive-ness of our sins." "He gave his life a ransom for many." "We who were afar off are made nigh by the Blood of Christ," "Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood;" with innumerable other passages, in which, with equal emphasis, the salvation of man is connected with the death of Christ.

This is so undeniable, that it is, to a certain extent, recognized in the two great schemes opposed to that

which has been received generally by the Church of Christ, which in all ages has proclaimed that the death of Christ was an expiatory sacrifice for the sins of men, and necessary to make the exercise of pardon consistent; with the essential righteousness of God, and with his righteous government. The Socinian scheme admits that the death of Christ was important to confirm his doctrine, and to lead to his resurrection, the crowning miracle by which its truth was demonstrated; and that we have redemption

through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, because

"we are led, by the due consideration of Christ's death, and its consequences, to that repentance, which, under the merciful constitution of the Divine government, always obtains forgiveness."

The second scheme, which is that of the modern Arians, goes farther. It represents the coming of Christ, whom they consider to be the most exalted of the creatures of God, into the world, and his labors

and sufferings in behalf of men, as acts of the most disinterested and tender benevolence, in reward and honor of which he is allowed to bestow pardon upon his disciples, upon their sincere repentance, and to plead his interest with God, who delights to honor the generous conduct of his Son toward the human race. His voluntary sufferings and death for the sins of mankind, according to them, gave to his intercession with God great efficacy, and thus, by his mediation, sinners are

reconciled to God, and raised to eternal life.

Far as even the latter of these theories falls below the sense of Scripture on this subject, yet both are, in this respect, important, that they concede that the death of Christ, as the means of human salvation, is made so prominent in the New Testament, that it cannot be left out of our consideration when the doctrine of man's salvation is treated of; and also, that this is a doctrine of the Holy Scriptures which must, in some way or

other, be accounted for and explained. The Socinian accounts for it by making the death of Christ the means by which repentance is produced in the heart of man, so as to constitute it morally fit that he should be forgiven. The modern Arian accounts for it by connecting with this notion, that kind of merit in the death of Christ which arises from a generous and benevolent self- devotion; and which, when pleaded by him in the way of mediation, God is pleased to honor by accepting repentance, when it is

produced in the heart and accompanied with purposes of amendment, in place of perfect obedience.

2. But the views given us of the death of Christ, by the writers of the New Testament, go much farther than these, because they represent the death of Christ as necessary to the salvation of men, a principle which both the hypotheses just mentioned wholly exclude. The reason of forgiveness is placed by one in repentance merely, by the other, also, in the exercise of the right which

God had to pardon, but which he chose to exercise in honor of the philanthropy of Jesus Christ. Both make the death of Christ, though in a different way and in a very subordinate sense, the means of obtaining pardon, because it is a means of bringing men into a state in which they are fit objects for the exercise of an act of grace; but the Scripture doctrine is, that the death of Christ is not the meritorious means, but the meritorious cause of the exercise of forgiveness: and repentance but one of the

instrumental means of actually obtaining it; and, in consistency with this view, they speak of the death of Christ, not as one of many means, by which the same end might have been accomplished; but as, in the strictest sense, necessary to man's salvation.

This, has, indeed, been considered, even by some divines professing orthodoxy, to be a bold position, but, as we shall see, with little consistency on their part. It follows, of course, from the Socinian

and Arian hypotheses, that if our Lord were a man, or an angelic creature; and if he were rather the mere messenger of a mercy which might be exercised on prerogative, than the procuring cause of it; any other creature beside himself might have conveyed the message of this mercy; might have exhibited a generous devotion in our behalf; and been an effectual instrument to bring men to that repentance which would prepare them to receive it. But when it is admitted, that Christ was

the Divine Son of God; that he was "God manifest in the flesh;" that the forgiveness of sin required a satisfaction to Divine justice of so noble and infinitely exalted a kind as that which was offered by the sufferings and death of the incarnate Deity, even from such premises alone it would seem necessarily to follow that, but for the interposition of Christ, sin could not have been forgiven, consistently with a perfectly righteous government, and, therefore, not forgiven at all, unless a sacrifice of

equal merit, which supposes a being of equal glory and dignity as its subject, could have been found. If no such being existed out of the Godhead, then human hope rested solely on the voluntary incarnation of the Son of GOD; and the overwhelming fact and mystery of his becoming flesh, in order to suffer for us, itself shows, that the case to be remedied was one of a character absolutely extreme, and, therefore, not otherwise remediable. If inferior means had been sufficient,

then more was done by the Father, when he delivered up his Son for us, than was necessary, a conclusion of an impious character; and if the greatest possible gift was bestowed, then nothing less could have been effectual, and this was necessary to human salvation. Every believer in the Divinity of Christ is bound to this conclusion.

This matter is, however, put beyond all reasonable question by the testimony of Scripture. "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer

and to rise from the dead." Here a necessity for the death of Christ is plainly expressed. If it be said, that the necessity was the fulfillment of what "had been written" in the prophets concerning the sufferings of Messiah, it is to be remembered, that what was predicted on this subject by the prophets arose out of a previous appointment of God, in whose eternal counsel Christ had been designated as the Redeemer of man; and that the sole end and reason of the death of Christ could not, therefore,

be the mere fulfillment of the prophecies respecting him. The verse which follows abundantly proves this-

"And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name," Luke 24:47. His death was not only necessary for the accomplishment of prophecy; but for the publication of

"repentance and remission of sins in his name," both of which, therefore, depended upon it. It was God's purpose to offer forgiveness to man, before

the prophets issued their predictions; it was his purpose to do this in "his name," on account of, and in consideration of his dying for them: this was predicted; but the necessity of the death of Christ rested on this previous appointment to which the prophecies corresponded. In Matthew 16:21, the same sentiment is expressed without any reference to the fulfillment of prophecy. "From that time forth began Jesus to show unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of

the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day." The answer, too, of our Lord to Peter, who, upon this declaration, said, "Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee," is remarkable. "But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offence to me; for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." These words plainly imply, that for Christ to suffer and die, and in this manner, and not according to the carnal and human

views of Peter, to accomplish the purpose of his coming into the world, was "of God;" it was his purpose, his appointment. This is not language to be used as to a martyr dying to prove his sincerity; for death, in such cases, is rather permitted than purposed and appointed, and it would be to adopt language never applied to such cases in the Holy Scriptures, to say that the sufferings and death of martyrs are "of God." The necessity of Christ's death, then, rested on Divine appointment, and that on

the necessity of the case; and if he "must" die, in order that we might live, then we live only in consequence of his death.

The same view is conveyed by a strongly figurative expression in John 12:23, 24: "And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." From which it inevitably follows, that the

death of Christ was as necessary to human salvation as the vegetable death of the seed of corn to the production of the harvest; necessary, therefore, in this sense, that one could not take place without the other. But for this he would have remained "alone," and have brought no "sons to glory."

In a word, all those passages of Scripture which speak of our salvation from death and misery by the sufferings of Christ, and call upon our gratitude on this account, are founded

upon the same doctrine. These are too numerous to be cited, and are sufficiently familiar. "We have redemption through his blood;" "we are saved from wrath through him," &c. Such forms of speech are continually occurring, and the highest ascriptions of praise are given to the Father and to the Son on this account. But, most clearly, they all suppose that "wrath" and "death," but for this interposition of the passion of Christ on our account, would have been the doom of sinning men.

They contain not the most distant intimation, that had not he come into the world "to seek and to save them that were lost," they would have been saved by any other means; that had not he, the good Shepherd, laid down his life for the sheep, they would have been brought by some other process into the heavenly fold. The very emphasis of the expression "lost," implies a desperate case; for as lost they could not have been described, if pardon had been offered them on mere repentance; and if the death of Christ

had been one only of many means, through some of which that disposition in God to forgive offenders must have operated, which is the doctrine of all who set up the goodness of the Divine government against its justice. In that case, mankind could not have been in a hopeless state, independent of Christ's redemption, the view which is uniformly taken of their case in Scripture, where the death of Christ is exhibited, not as one expedient of many, but as the only hope of the guilty.

3. The Scriptures, in speaking of the death of Christ, inform us that he died "for us," that is, in our room and stead. With this representation neither of the hypotheses to which we have adverted, as attempting to account for the importance attached to the death of our Lord in the New Testament, agrees, and, therefore, both of them fall far below the whole truth of the case.

The Socinian scheme makes the death of Christ only an incidental benefit, as sealing the truth of his

doctrine, and setting an example of eminent passive virtue. In this sense, indeed, they acknowledge that he died "for" men, because in this indirect manner they derive the benefit of instruction from his death, and because some of the motives to virtue are placed in a stronger light. The modern Arian scheme, sometimes called the intercession hypothesis, acknowledges that he acquired, by his disinterested and generous sufferings, the highest degree of virtue, and a powerful interest with God,

by which his intercession, on behalf of penitent offenders, is honoured by an exercise of higher mercy than would otherwise have taken place; but it by no means follows, from- this, that repentance might not otherwise have taken place, and mercy have been otherwise exercised. According to this view, then, Christ died for the benefit, indeed, of men, some, what more directly than on the Socinian scheme; but he did not die for them in the sense of the Scriptures, that is, in their room and stead; his death

was not vicarious, and it is not, on that account, directly, that the guilty are absolved from condemnation.

To prove that our Lord died for men, in the sense of dying in their stead, the testimony of the sacred writers must, however, be adduced, and it is equally abundant and explicit. St. Peter says he died, "the just for the unjust," that "he suffered for us." St. Paul that "he died for all," that "he tasted death for every man," that he died "for the ungodly," that "he gave

himself a ransom for all," and our Lord himself declares "that he gave himself a ransom for many." To show, however, that this phrase means no more than a final cause, and that the only notion intended to be conveyed is, that Christ died for our benefit, it is argued, by the objectors, that the Greek prepositions used in the above quotations huper, and hoti, do not always signify substitution; but are sometimes to be rendered "on account of" as when Christ is said to have "suffered for our sins,"

which cannot be rendered instead of our sins. All this may, indeed, be granted; but then it is as certain, that these prepositions do often signify substitution; and that the Greeks, by these forms of expression, were wont to express a vicarious death, is abundantly proved by the examples given by Raphelius, on Romans 5:8. Nor are instances wanting of texts in which these particles can only be interpreted when to taken in the sense of "instead of," and in "the place of."

So in the speech of Caiaphas, "it is expedient that one man should die, huper, for the people, and that the whole nation perish not;" he plainly declares, that either Christ or the nation must perish; and that by putting the former to death, he would die instead of the nation. In Romans 5:6-8, the sense in which Christ "died for us," is indubitably fixed by the context. "For scarcely for a righteous man will one die, yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die; but God commendeth his love

toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us;" on which passage Doddridge has observed, "one can hardly imagine anyone would die for a good man, unless it were to redeem his life by giving up his own." In this sense also, avn is used by the LXX, 2 Sam. 18:33, where David says concerning Absalom, "would to God I had died for thee," (hoti sou.) Here he could mean nothing else but to wish that he had died in Absalom's stead. In the sense of "in the room or stead of," hoti is also used

in many places of the New Testament; as, "Archelaus did reign in Judea (hoti) in the room of his father Herod:" "if he ask a fish, will he (hoti) for a fish, in place or instead of a fish, give him a serpent." When, therefore, the same preposition is used, Mark 10:45, "The Son of man came to give his life a ransom for (hoti) many," there can surely be no reason drawn from the meaning of the particle itself to prevent its being so understood. That it may be so taken is certain, for this is a sense of the preposition

constantly occurring; and if that sense is rejected and another chosen, the reason must be brought from the contrariety of the doctrine which it conveys to some other; whereas not one passage is, even pretended to be produced, which denies that Christ did thus die in the stead of the ungodly, and give his life a ransom in the place or stead of the lives of many. The particles uper and anti, have other senses: this is not denied; but, as Bishop Stillingfleet has observed, "a substitution could not be more properly expressed

than it is in Scripture by them."

The force of this has, at all times, been felt by the Socinians, and has rendered it necessary for them to resort to subterfuges. Socinus acknowledges, and after him Crellius, that, "when redemption is spoken of, hoti implies commutation" but they attempt to escape, by considering both the redemption and the commutation metaphorical. Dr. Priestley, too, admits the probability of the interpretation of

Christ's dying for us, being to die instead of us, and then contends that he did this consequentially and not directly so, "as a substitute for us; for if, in consequence of Christ's not having been sent to instruct and reform the world, mankind had continued unreformed, and if the necessary consequence of Christ's coming was his death, by whatever means, and in whatever manner it was brought about; it is plain that there was, in fact, no other alternative but his death or ours." (History of

Corruptions, &c.) Thus, under the force of the doctrine of the New Testament, that Christ died in our stead, he admits the absolute necessity of the death of Christ, in order to human salvation, contrary to all the principles he elsewhere lays down, and in refutation of his own objections and those of his followers to the orthodox view of the death of our Savior as being the only means by which mercy could be dispensed to mankind.

But that Christ died for us directly as a substitute, which is still the point denied, is to be fully proved from those scriptures, in which he is said to have borne the punishment due to our offences; and this being established, it puts an entire end to all quibbling on the import of the Greek prepositions.

To prove this, the passages of Holy Writ are exceedingly numerous; but it will be more satisfactory to select a few, and point out their force, than to give a long list of citations.

Grotius (De Satisfactione,) thus clearly proves that the Scriptures represent our sins as the impulsive cause of the death of Christ:-

"Another cause which moved God was our sins, which deserve punishment. Christ was delivered for our offences, Rom. 4:25. Here the apostle uses the preposition dia with the accusative case, which with all Greek authors, sacred and profane, is the most usual manner of expressing an impulsive cause. For instance, dia tauta, because of these things cometh the

wrath of God upon the children of disobedience,' Eph. 5:6. Indeed, whenever the expression, because of sins, is coupled with the mention of sufferings, it never admits of any other interpretation. 'I will chastise you seven times because of your sins,' Lev. 26:28. ' Because of these abominations the Lord, God cast them out from his sight,' Deut. 18:12. So it is used in many other places of the sacred writings, and nowhere in a different sense. The expression, for sins, is also evidently of the same force, whenever it is

connected with sufferings, as in the example following:' Christ died for our sins,' 1 Cor. 15:3. 'Christ hath once suffered for sins,' 1 Peter 3:18. 'Christ gave himself for our sins,' Gal. 1:4. 'Christ offered one sacrifice for sins,' Heb. 10:12. In all which places we have either huper or peri with the genitive case. But Socinus maintains, that in all these places a final and not an impulsive cause is intended. He even goes so far as to assert, that the Latin pro and the Greek huper never denote an

impulsive, but always a final cause. Many examples prove the latter assertion to be untrue. For both huper and peri are used to signify no less an impulsive than a final cause. The Gentiles are said to praise God huper eleos for his mercy, Rom. 15:9. Paul says thanks are given huper humon for us, Eph. 1:16. And uper pantos for all; Eph. 5:20. 'We pray you,' huper christos, for Christ, 2 Cor. 5:20. 'Great is my glorying for you, huper humon, 2 Cor. 7:4, 9:2, and 12:5. `Distresses (huper christos) for Christ,' 2 Cor.

12:10. 'I thank God (huper humon) for you,' 1 Cor. 1:4. ' God shall reprove all the ungodly (perí pántoon toón érgoon asebeías) for all their works of ungodliness,' Jude 15. In the same manner, the Latins say, to give or render thanks (pro beneficiis) for benefits, as often in Cicero. He also says, 'to take vengeance (pro injuriis) for injuries;' to suffer punishment (pro magnitudine sceleris) for the greatness of a crime;' to fear torments (pro maleficiis) for evil deeds. Plautus, ' to chastise (pro commerita noxia) for faults

which deserve it.' And Terence,' to take vengeance (pro dictis et factis) for words and deeds.' Certainly, in all these places, pro does not signify a final, but an impulsive cause. So, when Christ is said to have suffered and died for sins, the subject will not allow us, as Socinus wishes, to understand a final cause. Hence, also, as the Hebrew particle kole denotes an antecedent or impulsive cause, (see Psalm 38:9, and many other places,) the words of Isaiah 53, cannot be better translated, or

more agreeably with other scriptures, than He was wounded on account of our transgressions; he was bruised on account of our iniquities. And what can Romans 6:10, teé hamartía apéthanen, denote, but that he died on account of sin?"

Crellius, who attempted an answer to Grotius, at length acknowledges sin to have been an impulsive cause of the death of Christ; but neutralizes the admission by sophistry, on which Bishop Stillingfleet has well observed, that we understand not an

impulsive cause in so remote a sense, as though our sins were an occasion of Christ's dying, so that his death was one argument among many others, to believe his doctrine, the belief of which would cause men to leave their sins; but we contend for a nearer and more proper sense, that the death of Christ was primarily intended for the expiation of sins, with respect to God, and not to us, and that our sins, as an impulsive cause, are to be considered as so displeasing to God, that it was necessary, for the

vindication of honor and the deterring the world from sin, that no less a sacrifice of atonement should be offered than the blood of the Son of God. The sufferings of Christ, when considered with respect to our sins, are to be considered as a punishment; when with respect to God, as being designed to expiate them as a sacrifice of atonement.

It is thus that Christ is said to bear our sins. "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree," 1 Peter 2:24, where the

apostle evidently quotes from Isaiah 53. "He shall bear their iniquities." "He bore the sin of many." The same expression is used by St. Paul, Heb. 9:28, "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." Now to bear sin is, in the language of Scripture, to bear the punishment of sin, Levit. 22:9; Ezekiel 18:20, and the use of the compound verb anaphero, by both apostles, is worthy of notice. St. Peter "might have said simply phero, he bore; but wishing at the same time to signify his being lifted up on the cross,

he said anaphero, he bore up, meaning, he bore by going up to the cross." (Grotius.) St. Paul, too, uses the same verb with reference to the Levitical sacrifices, which were carried to an elevated altar; and to the sacrifice of Christ. Socinus and his followers cannot deny that to bear sin, in Scripture generally, signifies to bear the punishment of sin; but, availing themselves of the very force of the compound verb avaphero, just pointed out, they interpret the passage in St. Peter to signify the bearing up, that

is, the bearing or carrying away of our sins, which, according to them, may be effected in many other ways than by a vicarious sacrifice. To this, Grotius replies, "The particle ana will not admit of such a sense, nor is the word ever so used by any Greek writer. In the New Testament it never occurs in such a meaning." It is also decisive as to the sense in which St. Peter uses the phrase to bear sin, that he quotes from Isa. 53:11, "For he shall bear their iniquities," where the Hebrew word, by the

confession of all, is never used for taking away, but for bearing a burden, and is employed to express the punishment of sin, as in Lamentations 5:7,

"Our fathers have sinned, and are not, and we have borne their iniquities"

Similar to this expression of bearing sins, and equally impracticable to the criticism of the Socinians, is the declaration of Isaiah in the same chapter, "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities;" and then to show in what

sense he was wounded and bruised for our transgressions, he adds, "the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." Now, chastisement is the punishment of a fault; but the suffering person, of whom the prophet speaks, is declared by him to be wholly free from transgression; to be perfectly and emphatically innocent. This prophecy is applied to Christ by the apostles, whose constant doctrine is the entire immaculateness of their

Master and Lord. If chastisement, therefore, was laid upon Christ, it could not be on account of faults of his own; his sufferings were the chastisement of our faults, the price of our peace, and his "stripes," another punitive expression, were borne by him for our "healing." The only course which Socinus and his followers have taken, to endeavor to escape the force of this passage, is to render the word not chastisement, but affliction; in answer to which, Grotius and

subsequent critics have abundantly proved that it is used not to signify affliction of any kind; but that which has the nature of punishment. These passages, therefore, prove a substitution, a suffering in our stead.

The chastisement of offences was laid upon him, in order to our peace; and the offences were ours, since they could not be his "who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth."

The same view is presented to us under another, and

even still more forcible phrase, in the 6th and 7th verses of the same chapter. "All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned everyone to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him [literally, hath made to meet on him] the iniquity of us all; he was oppressed and he was afflicted." Bishop Lowth translates this passage,

"and the Lord hath made to light upon him the iniquity of us all; it was exacted, and he was made answerable." In a similar manner, several former

critics, (Vide Poll Synop.,) "he put or fixed together upon him the iniquity of us all; it was exacted, and he was afflicted." This sense is fully established by Grotius against Socinus, and by Bishop Stillingfleet against Crellius, and thus the passage is obviously incapable of explanation, except by allowing the sufferings and death of our Lord to be vicarious. Our iniquities, that is, according to the Hebrew mode of speaking, their punishment, are made to meet upon him; they are fixed together and laid

upon him; the penalty is exacted from him, though he himself had incurred no penalty personally, and, therefore, it was in consequence of that vicarious exaction that he was "afflicted," was "made answerable," and, voluntarily submitting, "he opened not his mouth."

In 2 Cor. 5:21, the apostle uses almost the same language. "For he hath made him to be sin [a sin offering] for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." The Socinian

Improved Version has a note on this passage so obscure that the point is evidently given up in despair. Socinus before had attempted an elusive interpretation, which requires scarcely an effort to refute. By Christ's being made "sin," he would understand being esteemed a sinner by men. But, as Grotius observes, (De Satisfactione,) neither is the Greek word, translated sin, nor the Hebrew word, answering to it, ever taken in such a sense. Beside, the apostle has attributed this act to GOD; it was he who

made him to be sin; but he certainly did not cause the Jews and others to esteem Christ a wicked man. On the contrary, by a voice from heaven, and by miracles, he did all that was proper to prove to all men his innocence. Farther, St. Paul places

"sin" and "righteousness" in opposition to each other - "we are made the righteousness of God,"

that is, are justified and freed from Divine punishment; but, in order to this, Christ was "made sin," or bore our

punishment. There is also another antithesis in the apostle's words- God made him who knew no sin, and consequently deserved no punishment, to be sin; that is, it pleased him that he should be punished; but Christ was innocent, not only according to human laws, but according to the law of GOD; the antithesis, therefore, requires us to understand, that he bore the penalty of that law, and that he bore it in our stead.

How explicitly the death of Christ is represented in the New Testament as penal,

which it could not be in any other way than by his taking our place, and suffering in our stead, is manifest also from Gal. 3:13, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse [an execration] for us, for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." The passage in Moses, to which St. Paul refers, is Deut. 21:22, 23: "If a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and be put to death, and they hang him on a tree; his body shall not remain all night

upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day, for he that is hanged is accursed of God, that thy land be not defiled." This infamy was only inflicted upon great offenders, and was designed to show the light in which the person, thus exposed, was viewed by God, - he was a curse or execration. On this the remarks of Grotius are most forcible and conclusive:- "Socinus says, that to be an execration means to be under the punishment of execration, which is true. For

ekdikesis, everywhere denotes punishment proceeding from the sanction of law, 2 Peter 2:14; Matt. 25:41. Socinus also admits, that the cross of Christ was this curse; his cross, therefore, had the nature of punishment, which is what we maintain. Perhaps Socinus allows that the cross of Christ was a punishment, because Pilate, as a judge, inflicted it; but this does not come up to the intention of the apostle; for, in order to prove that Christ was made obnoxious to punishment, he cites Moses, who

expressly asserts, that whoever hangs on a tree, according to the Divine law, is'

accursed of God,'- consequently, in the words of the apostle, who cites this place of Moses, and refers it to Christ, we must supply the same circumstance,' accursed of God,' as if he had said Christ was made accursed of God, or obnoxious to the highest and most ignominious punishment

'for us, that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles,' &c. For when

the apostles speak of the sufferings of Christ in reference to our good, they do not regard the acts of men in them, but the act of God." (De Satisfactione.)

4. We are carried still farther into the real nature and design of the death of Christ, by those passages of Holy Scripture which connect with it propitiation, atonement, reconciliation, and the making peace between God and man; and the more attentively these are considered, the more unfounded will the

Socinian notion appear, which represents the death of Christ as, indirectly only, a benefit to us, and as saving us from our sins and their punishment only as it is a motive to repentance and virtue.

To propitiate is to appease, to atone, and to turn away the wrath of an offended person. In the case before us the wrath turned away is the wrath of GOD; the person making the propitiation is Christ; the propitiating offering or sacrifice is his blood. All this is expressed, in most

explicit terms, in the following passages:1 John 2:2, "And he is the propitiation for our sins," 1 John 4:10, "Herein is love, not that we loved GOD; but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Rom. 3:25, "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his Wood." The word used in the two former passages is hilasmos; in the last hilasterion.

Both are from the verb hilasko, so often used by Greek writers to express

the action of a person, who, in some appointed way, turned away the wrath of a deity; and, therefore, cannot bear the sense which Socinus would put upon it, - the destruction of sin. This is not supported by a single example: with all Greek authorities, whether poets, historians, or others, the word means to propitiate, and is, for the most part, Construed with an accusative case, designating the person whose displeasure is averted. (Grotius De Satisfactione) As this could not be denied, Crellius

comes to the aid of Socinus, and contends that the sense of this word was not to be taken from its common use in the Greek tongue; but from the Hellenistic use of it, namely, its use in the Greek of the New Testament, the LXX, and the Apocrypha. But this will not serve him; for, both by the LXX and in the Apocrypha it is used in the same sense as in the Greek classic writers. Ezekiel 44:27, "He shall offer his sin offering, (hilasmon,) saith the Lord GOD;" Ezekiel 45:19,"And the priest shall take of

blood of the sin offering, esilasmos." Num. 5:8, "The ram of the atonement,"

kuriw tw iepei; to which may be added, out of the Apocrypha, 2 Maccabees 3:33, "Now as the high priest was making an atonement," hilasmon. The propitiatory sense of the word hilasmos; being thus fixed, the modern Socinians have conceded, in their note on John 2:2, in their Improved Version, that it means "the pacifying of an offended party;" but they subjoin that Christ is a propitiation, because "by

his Gospel he brings sinners to repentance, and thus averts the Divine displeasure.' The concession is important; and the comment cannot weaken it, because of its absurdity; for, in that interpretation of propitiation, Moses, or any of the apostles, or any minister of the Gospel now who succeeds in bringing sinners to repentance, is as truly a propitiation for sin as Christ himself. On Rom. 3:25, however, the authors of the Improved Version continue to follow their master Socinus, and

translate the passage, "whom God hath set forth a propitiation, through faith in his blood." "Whom God hath set forth as a mercy seat, in his own blood;" and lay great stress upon this rendering, as removing "that countenance to the doctrine of atonement by vicarious sufferings," which the common translation affords. The word hilasterion is used in the Septuagint version, and in the Epistle to the Hebrews, to express the mercy seat or covering of the ark. But so little is to be gained by taking it in this sense in

this passage, that this rendering is adopted by several orthodox commentators as expressing, by a figure, or rather by supplying a type to the antitype, in a very emphatic manner, the doctrine of our Lord's atonement. The mercy seat was so called, because, under the Old Testament, it was the place where the high priest, on the feast of expiation, sprinkled the blood of the sin offerings, in order to make an atonement for himself and the whole congregation; and, since God accepted

the offering which was then made, it is, for this reason, accounted the medium through which God showed himself propitious to the people. With reference to this, Jesus Christ may be called a mercy seat, as being the person in or through whom God shows himself propitious to mankind.

And as, under the law, God was propitious to those who came to him by appearing before his mercy seat with the blood of their sin offerings; so, under the Gospel dispensation, he is

propitious to those who come unto him by Jesus Christ, through faith in that blood which is elsewhere called "the blood of sprinkling" which he shed for the remission of sins. Some able critics have, however, argued, from the force of the context, that the word ought to be taken actively, and not merely declaratively; not as "a propitiatory" but as a "propitiation" which, says Grotius, "is shown by the mention which is afterward made of blood, to which the power of propitiation is ascribed." Others supply

duma, or iexeion, and render it expiatory sacrifice. (Vide Elsner Obs. Schleusner sub voce.) But, whichever of these renderings be adopted, the same doctrine is held forth to us. The covering of the ark was rendered a propitiatory only by the blood of the victims sprinkled before and upon it; and when the apostle says, that God hath set forth Jesus Christ to be a propitiatory, he immediately adds, having the ceremonies of the temple in his view, "through faith in his

blood." The text, therefore, contains no exhibition of any means of obtaining mercy but through.the blood of sacrifice, according to the rule laid down in the Epistle to the Hebrews, "without shedding of blood there is no remission;" and is in strict accordance with Ephesians 1:7, "We have redemption through his blood, the remission of sins." It is only by his blood that Christ himself reconciles us to God.

Unable, then, as they who deny the vicarious nature

of the sufferings of Christ, are to evade the testimony of the above passages which speak of our Lord as a propitiation, what is their next resource? They deny the existence of wrath in God, in the hope of proving that propitiation, in a proper sense, cannot be the doctrine of Scripture, whatever may be the force of the mere terms which the sacred writers employ. In order to give plausibility to their statement, they pervert and caricature the opinion of the orthodox, and argue as though it formed a part of the

doctrine of Christ's propitiation and oblation for sin, that God is naturally an implacable and vengeful being, only made placable and disposed to show mercy by satisfaction being made to his displeasure through our Lord's sufferings and death. This is as contrary to Scripture as it is to the opinions of all sober persons who hold the doctrine of Christ's atonement. God is love; but it is not necessary in order to support this truth, to assume that he is nothing else, He has, as we have

seen, other attributes, which harmonize with this and with each other, though assuredly that harmony cannot be exhibited by any who deny the propitiation for sin made by the death of Christ. Their system, therefore, obliges them to deny the existence of some of the attributes of God, or to explain them away.

It is sufficient to show that there is not only no implacability in God, but a most tender and placable affection toward the sinning human race itself,

that the Son of God, by whom the propitiation was made, was the free gift of the Father to us. This is the most eminent proof of his love, that for our sakes, and that mercy might be extended to us, "he spared not his own Son; but delivered him up freely for us all." Thus he is the fountain and first moving cause of that scheme of recovery and salvation, which the incarnation and death of our Lord brought into full and efficient operation. The question, indeed, is not whether God is love, or whether he is of

a placable nature; in that we are agreed; but it is, whether God is holy and just; whether we, his creatures, are under law or not; whether this law has any penalty, and whether God, in his rectoral character, is bound to execute and uphold that law. These are points which have already been established, and as the justice of God is punitive, (for if it is not punitive, his laws are a dead letter,) then is there wrath in God; then is God angry with the wicked; then is man, as a sinner, obnoxious to this

anger; and so a propitiation becomes necessary to turn it away from him. Nor are these terms unscriptural; they are used in the New Testament as emphatically as in the Old, though in a special sense, a revelation of the mercy of God to man. John the Baptist declares that, if any man believeth not on the Son of God, "the wrath of God abideth upon him."

St. Paul declares, that "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and

unrighteousness of men." The day of judgment is, with reference to the ungodly, said to be "the day of wrath;" God is called "a consuming fire;" and as such, is the object of "reverence and godly fear." Nor is this his displeasure light, and the consequences of it a trifling and temporary inconvenience. When we only regard the consequences which have followed sin in society, from the earliest ages, and in every part of the world, and add to these the many direct and fearful inflictions of punishment

which have proceeded from the "Judge of the whole earth," to use the language of Scripture, "our flesh may well tremble because of his judgments." But when we look at the future state of the wicked, as it is represented in Scripture, though expressed generally, and surrounded as it is with the mystery of a world, and a condition of being, unknown to us in the present state, all evils which history has crowded into the lot of man appear insignificant in comparison of banishment from God-separation from the good-

public condemnation- torment of spirit - "weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth" - "everlasting destruction" - "everlasting fire." Let men talk ever so much, and eloquently, of the pure benevolence of God, they cannot abolish the facts recorded in the history of human suffering in this world as the effect of transgression; nor can they dis. charge these fearful communications from the pages of the book of God. They cannot be criticized away; and if it is" Jesus who saves us from this

wrath to come," that is, from those effects of the wrath of God which are to come, then, but for him, we should have been liable to them. That principle in God, from which such effects follow, the Scriptures call wrath; and they who deny the existence of wrath in God, deny, therefore, the Scriptures.

It by no means follows, however, that those who thus bow to inspired authority, must interpret wrath to be a passion in God; or that, though we

conclude the awful attribute of his justice to require satisfaction, in order to the forgiveness of the guilty, we afford reason to any to charge us with attributing vengeful affections to the Divine Being. "Our adversaries," says Bishop Stillingfleet," first make opinions for us, and then show that they are unreasonable. They first suppose that anger in God is to be considered as a passion, and that passion a desire of revenge, and then tell us, that if we do not prove that this desire of revenge can be satisfied by

the sufferings of Christ, then we can never prove the doctrine of satisfaction to be true; whereas we do not mean, by God's anger, any such passion, but the just declaration of God's will to punish, upon our provocation of him by our sins; we do not make the design of the satisfaction to be that God may please himself in the revenging the sins of the guilty upon the most innocent person, because we make the design of punishment not to be the satisfaction of anger as a desire of revenge, but to be the

vindication of the honor and rights of the offended person by such a way as he himself shall judge satisfactory to the ends of his government." (Discourse on the Sufferings of Christ,)

This is a sufficient answer; and we now proceed with those passages of Scripture, the phraseology of which still farther establishes the doctrine of Christ's atonement. To those, in which Christ is called a propitiation, we add those which speak of reconciliation and the

establishment of peace between God and man as the design and direct effect of his death. So Col.

1:19, 22, "For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell, and having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven; and you that were some time alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled, in the body of his flesh through death"

Romans 5:10, 11, "For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God, by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement" 2 Cor. 5:18, 19, "And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation." The verbs translated to reconcile are katallassoon and apokatallassoon, which

signify a change from one state to another; but, in these passages, the connection determines the nature of the change to be a change from enmity to friendship. In Rom. 5:11, the noun katallago is rendered, in our translation", atonement; but it is contended, that it ought to have been rendered reconciliation, unless we admit the primitive meaning of the English word atonement, which is being at one, to be affixed to it. It was not in this sense certainly that the word atonement was used

by the translators, and it is now fixed in its meaning, and, in common language, signifies propitiation in the proper and sacrificial sense. It is not, however, at all necessary to stand upon the rendering of katallago in this passage by the term atonement. We lose nothing, as we shall see, and the Socinians gain nothing by rendering it reconciliation, which, indeed, appears more agreeable to the context. The word atonement would have been a proper substitute for "propitiation" in those

passages of the New Testament in which it occurs, as being more obvious in its meaning to the common reader; and because the original word answers to the Hebrew kaphar, which is used for the legal atonements; "but as the reconciliation which we have received through Christ was the effect of atonement made for us by his death, words which denote the former simply, as katallago, and words from the same root, may, when applied to the sacrifice of Christ, be not unfitly expressed by the

latter, as containing in them its full import." (Magee's Discourses.) We may observe, also, that if, as it is contended, we must render Romans 5:11, "by whom we have received the reconciliation, "the preceding verse must not be overlooked, which declares a when we were enemies we were reconciled to God, by the death of his Son" which death we have just seen is in other passages called a "propitiation" or "atonement;" and so the apostle conveys no other idea by the term

reconciliation, than reconciliation through an atonement.

The expressions "reconciliation" and "making peace," necessarily suppose a previous state of hostility between God and man, which is reciprocal. This is sometimes called enmity, a term as it respects God, rather unfortunate, since enmity is almost fixed in our language to signify a malignant and revengeful feeling. Of this, the oppugners of the doctrine of the atonement have

availed themselves to argue, that as there can be no such affection in the Divine nature, therefore, reconciliation in Scripture does not mean the reconciliation of God to man, but of man to God, whose enmity the example and teaching of Christ they tell us are very effectual to subdue. It is, indeed, a sad and bumbling truth, and one which the Socinians in their discussions on the natural innocence of man are not willing to admit, that by the infection of sin "the carnal mind is enmity to God," that human nature

is malignantly hostile to God, and to the control of his law; but this is far from expressing the whole of that relation of man, in which, in Scripture he is said to be at enmity with God, and so to need a reconciliation, - the making of peace between God and him. That relation is a legal one, as that of a sovereign in his judicial capacity and a criminal who has violated his laws, and risen up against his authority, and who is, therefore, treated as an enemy. The word echthros is used in this passive sense, both in the

Greek writers and in the New Testament. So, in Romans 11:28, the Jews rejected and punished for refusing the Gospel are said by the apostle, "as concerning the Gospel" to be "enemies for your sakes;" treated and accounted such; "but, as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes." In the same epistle, chap, v, 10, the term is used precisely in the same sense, and that with reference to the "reconciliation" by Christ, - "for if when we were enemies we were

reconciled to God by the death of his Son," - that is, when we were objects of the Divine judicial displeasure, accounted as enemies, and liable to be capitally treated as such. Enmity, in the sense of malignity and the sentiment of hatred, is added to this relation in the case of man; but it is no part of the relation itself; it is rather a cause of it, as it is one of the actions of a corrupt nature which render man obnoxious to the displeasure and the penalty of the law of God, and place him in the

condition of an enemy. It is this judicial variance and opposition between God and man, which is referred to in the term ' reconciliation," and in the phrase "making peace," in the New Testament; and the hostility is, therefore, in its own nature mutual.

But that there is no truth in the notion just refuted, viz. that reconciliation means no more than our laying aside our enmity to God, may also be shown from several express passages. The first is the passage we have above cited, Romans

5:11, "For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God." Here the act of reconciling is ascribed to God and not to us; but if this reconciliation consisted in the laying aside our own enmity, the act would be ours alone; and, farther, that it could not be the laying aside of our enmity, is clear from the text, which speaks of reconciliation while we were yet enemies. "The reconciliation spoken of here, is not, as Socinus and his followers have said, our conversion. For that the apostle is speaking of a

benefit obtained for us previous to our conversion, appears evident from the opposite members of the two sentences. That of the former runs thus: 'much more being justified, we shall be saved from wrath through him,' and that of the latter, ' much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.' The apostle argues from the greater to the less. If God were so benign to us before our conversion, what may we not expect from him now we are converted? To reconcile here cannot mean to convert; for the apostle

evidently speaks of something greatly remarkable in the act of Christ; but to convert sinners is nothing remarkable, since none but sinners can be ever converted; whereas it was a rare and singular thing for Christ to die for sinners, and to reconcile sinners to God by his death, when there have been but very few good men, who have died for their friends. In the next place, conversion is referred more properly to his glorious life, than to his shameful death; but this reconciliation is

attributed to his death, as contradistinguished from his glorious life, as is evident from the antithesis contained in the two verses. Beside, it is from the latter benefit that we learn the nature of the former. The latter, which belongs only to the converted, consists of the peace of God, and salvation from wrath, verse 9,10, This, the apostle afterward calls, receiving the reconciliation, and what is it to receive the reconciliation, but to receive the remission of sins? Acts 10:43. To receive

conversion is a mode of speaking entirely unknown. If, then, to receive the reconciliation is to receive the remission of sins and in effect to be delivered from wrath or punishment, to be reconciled must have a corresponding signification." (Vide Grotius De Satisfactione.)

2 Cor. 5:19, "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." Here, the manner of this reconciliation is expressly

said to be not our laying aside our enmity, but the non-imputation of our trespasses to us by God, in other words, the pardoning our offences and restoring us to favor. The promise, on God's part, to do this is expressive of his previous reconciliation to the world by the death of Christ; for our actual reconciliation is distinguished from this by what follows, and hath "committed to us the ministry of reconciliation," by virtue of which all men were, by the apostles, entreated and besought to be reconciled to God. The

reason, too, of this reconciliation of God to the world, by virtue of which he promises not to impute sin, is grounded by the apostle, in the last verse of the chapter, not upon the laying aside of enmity by men, but upon the sacrifice of Christ:- "for he hath made him to be sin (a sin offering) for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

Ephesians 2:16, "And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the

enmity thereby." Here the act of reconciling is attributed to Christ. Man is not spoken of as reconciling himself to God, but Christ is said to reconcile Jews and Gentiles together, and both to God, "by his cross." Thus, says the apostle," he is our peace;" but in what manner is the peace effected? Not, in the first instance, by subduing the enmity of man's heart, but by removing the enmity of "the law." "Having abolished in, or by his flesh, the enmity, even the law of commandments."

The ceremonial law only is here, probably, meant; for by its abolition through its fulfillment in Christ the enmity between Jews and Gentiles was taken away; but still it was not only necessity to reconcile Jew and Gentile together, but to "reconcile both unto God." This he did by the same act; abolishing the ceremonial law by becoming the antitype of all its sacrifices; and thus, by the sacrifice of himself, effecting the reconciliation of all to God,

"slaying the enmity by his cross," taking away whatever hindered the reconciliation of the guilty to God, which, as we have seen, was not enmity and hatred to God in the human mind only, but that judicial hostility and variance which separated God and man as Judge and criminal. The feeble criticism of Socinus, on this passage, in which he has been followed by his adherents to this day, is thus answered by Grotius. "In this passage, the dative Theo, to God, can only be governed by the verb

apakatallaxn, that he might reconcile; for the interpretation of Socinus, which makes 'to God' stand by itself, or that to reconcile to God is to reconcile them among themselves, that they might serve God, is distorted and without example. Nor is the argument valid which is drawn, from thence, that in this place St. Paul properly treats of the peace made between Jews and Gentiles; for neither does it follow, from this argument, that it was beside his purpose to mention the peace made for each with God. For the

two opposites which are joined, are so joined among themselves, that they should be primarily and chiefly joined by that bond; for they are not united among themselves, except by and for that bond. Gentiles and Jews, therefore, are made friends among themselves by friendship with God." (Vide Grolius De Satisfaction.)

Here also a critical remark will be appropriate. The above passages will show how falsely it has been asserted that God is nowhere, in Scripture, said

to be reconciled to us, and that they only declare that we are reconciled to GOD; but the fact is, that the very phrase of our being reconciled to God, imports the turning away his wrath from us Whitby observes, on the words katallattein and katallagh, "that they naturally import the reconciliation of one that is angry or displeased with us, both in profane and Jewish writers." (See also Hammond, Rosenmuller, and Schleusner.] When the Philistines suspected that David would appease the anger of Saul, by becoming

their adversary, they said, "Wherewith should he reconcile himself to his master?

Should it not be with the heads of these men?" - Not, surely, how shall he remove his own anger against his master; but how shall he remove his master's anger against him; how shall he restore himself to his master's favor? "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, "not that thou hast aught against thy brother,"

first be reconciled to thy brother;" that is, appease and conciliate him: so that the words, in fact, import "see that thy brother be reconciled to thee," since that which goes before is not that he hath done thee an injury, but thou him. (7)

(7) The writers of the New Testament, say some, derive this mode of expression from the force of the Hebrew word ratsah transferred to the Greek word; but Palairet, Grotius, and Schleusner, give instances of the use of the term, in the lame

signification, in writers purely Greek.

Thus, then, for us to be reconciled to God is to avail ourselves of the means by which the anger of God toward us is to be appeased, which the New Testament expressly declares to be generally

"the sin offering" of him "who knew no sin," and instrumentally, as to each individual personally, "faith in his blood."

A general objection of the Socinians to this doctrine

of reconciliation may be easily answered.

When we speak of the necessity of Christ's atonement, in order to man's forgiveness, we are told that we represent the Deity as implacable; when we rebut that by showing that it was his very placability, his boundless and ineffable love to men, which sent his Son into the world to die for the sins of mankind, they rejoin with their leaders, Socinus and Crellius, that then "God was reconciled before he sent his Son, and that,

therefore, Christ did not die to reconcile God to us."

The answer plainly is, that in this objection, they either mean that God had, from the placability and compassion of his nature, determined to be reconciled to offenders upon the sending his Son, or that he was actually reconciled when our Lord was sent. The first is what we contend for, and is in no wise inconsistent with the submission of our Lord to death, since that was in pursuance of the merciful appointment and decree of

the Father; and the necessary medium by which this placability of God could honorably and consistently show itself in actual reconciliation, or the pardon of sin. That God was not actually reconciled to man, that is, that he did not forgive our offences, independent of the death of Christ, is clear, for then sin would have been forgiven before it was committed, and remission of sins could not have been preached in the name of Christ, nor could a ministry of reconciliation have been committed to the apostles.

The reconciliation of God to man is, throughout, a conditional one, and, as in all conditional processes of this kind, it has three stages. The first is when the party offended is disposed to admit of terms of agreement, which, in God, is matter of pure grace and favor; the second is when he declares his acceptance of the mediation of a third person, and that he is so satisfied with what he hath done in order to it, that he appoints it to be announced to the offender, that if the breach continues, the fault lies

wholly upon himself; the third is when the offender accepts of the terms of agreement which are offered to him, submits, and is received into favor. "Thus,"

says Bishop Stillingfleet, "upon the death and sufferings of Christ, God declares that he is so satisfied with what Christ hath done and suffered in order to the reconciliation between himself and us, that he now publishes remission of sins to the world, upon those terms which the Mediator hath

declared by his own doctrine and the apostles he sent to preach it. But because remission of sins doth not immediately follow upon the death of Christ, without any supposition of any act on our part, therefore the state of favor doth commence from the performance of the conditions which are required of us." (Discourse on the Sufferings of Christ, See also Grotius De Satisfactione, cap. vii.) Whoever considers these obvious distinctions will have an ample answer to the Socinian objection.

5. To the texts which speak of reconciliation with God as illustrative of the nature of the death of Christ for us, we add those which speak of "redemption;" either by employing that word itself, or others of the same import. Rom. 3:24, "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Gal. 3:13, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." Ephesians 1:7, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins,

according to the riches of his grace." 1 Peter 1:18, 19, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot," 1 Cor. 6:19, 20, "And ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price."

By redemption, those who deny the atonement made by Christ wish to understand deliverance

merely, regarding only the effect, and studiously putting out of sight the cause from which it flows. But the very terms used in the above cited passages," to redeem," and "to be bought with a price," will each be found to refute this notion of a gratuitous deliverance, whether from sin or punishment, or both. Our English word to redeem, literally means to buy back; and lutroo, to redeem, and antilutrons, redemption, are, both in Greek writers and in the New Testament, used for the act of setting free a

captive, by paying lutron, a ransom or redemption price. But, as Grotius (De Satisfactione, cap. viii) has fully shown, by reference to the use of the words both in sacred and profane writers, redemption signifies not merely the liberation of captives, but deliverance from exile, death, and every other evil from which we may be freed; and lutron signifies everything which satisfies another, so as to effect this deliverance. The nature of this redemption, or purchased deliverance, (for it is not gratuitous

liberation, as will presently appear,) is, therefore, to be ascertained by the circum. stances of those who are the subjects of it.

The subjects in the case before us are sinful men. They are under guilt, - under "the curse of the law," the servants of sin, under the power and dominion of the devil, and "taken captive by him at his will" - liable to the death of the body and to eternal punishment. To the whole of this case, the redemption, the purchased deliverance of man, as

proclaimed in the Gospel, applies itself.

Hence, in the above cited and other passages, it is said "we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins," in opposition to guilt; redemption from "the curse of the law;"

deliverance from sin, that "we should be set free from sin;" deliverance from the power of Satan; from death, by a resurrection; and from future "wrath," by the gift of eternal life. Throughout the whole of this glorious doctrine of

our redemption from these tremendous evils there is, however, in the New Testament, a constant reference to the lutron, the redemption price, which lutron is as constantly declared to be the death of Christ, which he endured in our stead. Matt, 20:28, "The Son of man came to give his life a ransom (lutron) for many." 1 Tim. 2:6, "Who gave himself a ransom (antilutron) for all." Ephesians 1:7, "In whom we have redemption (teen apolutroosin) through his blood" 1 Peter 1:18, 19, "Ye were not

redeemed elutroótheete with corruptible things, as silver and gold-but with the precious blood of Christ." That deliverance of man from sin, misery, and all other penal evils of his transgression which constitutes our redemption by Christ is not, therefore, a gratuitous deliverance, granted without a consideration, as an act of mere prerogative; the ransom, the redemption price, was exacted and paid; one thing was given for another, - the precious blood of Christ for captive and condemned men. Of

the same import are those passages which represent us as having been "bought" or "purchased" by Christ. St.

Peter speaks of those "who denied the Lord that bought them," (ton agorasanta autous,) and St.

Paul, in the passage cited above, says "ye are bought (eegorástheete) with a price; "which price is expressly said by St. John, Rev. 5:9, to be the blood of Christ - "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God (egorasas, hast

purchased us) by thy blood."

The means by which it has been attempted to evade the force of these most express statements of the inspired writers remain to be pointed out and refuted.

The first is to allege that the term redemption is sometimes used for simple deliverance, where no price or consideration is supposed to be given; as when we read in the Old Testament of God's redeeming his people from trouble, from death, from danger, where no price is

mentioned; and when Moses is called, Acts 7:35, lutrooteen, a redeemer, because he delivered his people from the bondage of Egypt. But the occasional use of the term in an improper and allusive sense cannot be urged against its strict and proper signification universally; and granting the occasional use of it in an improper sense, it will still remain to be proved that, in the passages just adduced out of the New Testament, it is used in this manner. The propriety of words is not to be receded from, but for

weighty reasons. The strict meaning of the verb to redeem, is to deliver from captivity, by paying a ransom; it is extended to signify deliverance from evils of various kinds by the intervention of a valuable consideration; it is, in some cases, used for deliverance by any means; the context of the passage, in which the word occurs, and the circumstances of the case must, therefore, be resorted to in order to determine the sense in which the word is used. Fair criticism requires that we take words in their

proper sense, unless a sufficient reason can be shown, from their connection, to the contrary, and not that we are first to take them in their improper sense until the proper sense is forced upon us by argument. This, however, is not a case of argument, but of the obvious sense of the words used; for if deliverances, in some passages of the Old Testament, from trouble and danger are spoken of as a redemption, without reference to a lutron, or ransom, our redemption by Christ is not so spoken of;

but, on the contrary, the lutron, or redemption price, is repeatedly, expressly, and emphatically mentioned, and that price is said to be "the blood of Christ." When Greek writers speak of apoina and lutra, with reference to the release of a prisoner, nothing could be more absurd, than to attempt to resolve these terms into a figurative meaning; because their mention of the price, and the act of paying it, and the circumstances under which it was paid, all show that they use the terms in the

proper and strict sense. For the same reason must they be so understood in the New Testament, since the price itself, which constitutes the lutron, and the person who paid it, and the circumstances under which the transaction took place, are all given with as minute an historical precision, and a figurative interpretation would involve us in as great an absurdity in the one case as the other.

We apply this to the case of Moses being called a redeemer, with reference to

his delivering Israel from Egypt, and remark, that the improper use of that term may be allowed in the case of Moses, because he is nowhere said to have redeemed Israel by his death, nor by his blood, nor to have purchased the Jews with a price, nor to have given himself as a ransom; nor to have interposed any other consideration, on account of which he was allowed to lead his people out of captivity. He is said to be a deliverer, a redeemer, and that is all; but the idea of a proper redemption could not in

the nature of things, apply to the case, and, therefore, it is impossible to interpret the term in its proper sense. The Jews were captives, and he delivered them, this was sufficient to warrant the use of the term redemption in its improper sense, a very customary thing in language; but their captivity was not their fault, as ours is; it was not penal, as ours; they were delivered from unjust oppression; and God required of Moses no redemption price, as a consideration for interposing to free them

from bondage. In our case, the captivity was penal; there was a right lodged with the justice of God to detain us, and to inflict punishment upon us; and a consideration was therefore required, in respect of which that right was relaxed. In one instance we are, therefore, compelled to interpret the word in an improper sense; in the other strictly; at least no argument can be drawn from the use of the word with reference to Moses, to turn it out of its proper signification when used of Christ; and especially when

all the circumstances, which the word in its proper sense was intended to convey, are found in the case to which the redemption of man by Christ is applied. Above all, the word luron is added by Scripture to the deliverance of men, effected by Christ; but it is nowhere added to the deliverance effected for the Israelites by Moses; and by this it is, in fact, declared, that the mode by which the redemption of each was effected, was not the same, - the one was by the destruction of the enemies of the Israelites;

the other by the death of the Deliverer himself. (8) (8) "Nam Mosis cum Christo instituta collatio, responsione vix indiget, c m omnis similitudo certos habeat terminos, quos extra protendi nequeat. Compa-rantur illi, qua liberatores, non ob liberandi modum. Neque magis ex eo sequitur, Christum satisfaciendo nos non liberasse, quia Moses id non fecerit, quam Christum nos liberasse per hominum mortem, quia id fecerit Moses, Quod si ad modum quoque liberandi comparatio pertineret, ea

ut rectius procederet, dicendum esset, Christum nos liberasse miraculis, (ut Moses,) non autem sua morte suoque sanguine, quod Mosi nee adscribitur, nee adscribi potest. Sed praecipium est, quod vox lutron, de cujus vi hie agimiis, liberationi per Mosen partae nusquam additur. Quid quod ne est Socini quidem sententia modus liberandi idem est? Nam Moses, Josue, et alii liberarunt, non aliquid faciendo circa liberandos, (quod Christo Socinus tribuit) sed amovendo eos qui libertati obstabant,

hostes scili cet," (Grotius, De Satisfactione, cap. viii.)

It has been attempted to evade the literal import of the important terms on which we have dwelt, by urging, that such an. interpretation would involve the absurdity of paying a price to Satan, the power said to hold men captive at his will.

But why should the idea of redemption be confined to the purchasing of a captive? The reason appears to be, that the objection may be invested with some plausibility. The

fact, however, is, that this is but one species and instance of redemption; for the word, in its proper and general sense, means deliverance from evil of any kind, a lutroo or valuable consideration intervening; which valuable consideration may not always be literally a price, that is, not money, but something done, or something suffered, by which, in the case of commutation of punishment, the lawgiver is satisfied, though no benefit occurs to him; because in punishment respect is not

had to the benefit of the lawgiver, but to the common good and order of things. So when Zaleucus, the Locrian lawgiver, had to pass sentence upon his son, for a crime which, by his own laws, condemned the aggressor to the loss of both his eyes, rather than relax his laws by sparing his son, he ordered him to be deprived of one of his eyes, and submitted to be deprived of one himself. Thus the eye of Zaleucus was the lutroo of that of his son; and, in a decimation of mutinous soldiers, those

who are punished are the lutroo of the whole body.

But even if the redemption, in Scripture, related wholly to captivity, it does not follow that the price must be paid to him who detains the captive. Our captivity to Satan is not parallel to the case of a captive taken in war, and in whom, by the laws of war, the captor has obtained a right, and demands an equivalent for liberation and the renunciation of that right. Our captivity to Satan is judicial. Man listens to temptation, violates the

laws of God, joins in a rebellion against his authority, and his being left under the power of Satan is a part of his punishment. The satisfaction is, therefore, to be made to the law under which this captivity is made a part of the penalty; not to him who detains the captive, and who is but a permitted instrument in the execution of the law, but to him whose law has been violated. He who pays the price of redemption has to do with the judicial authority only, and, his lutroo being accepted, he

proceeds to rescue the object of his compassion, and becomes the actual redeemer.

The lutroo, in the case of man, is the blood of Christ; and our redemption is not a commutation of a pecuniary price for a person, but a commutation of the sufferings of one person in the stead of another, which sufferings being a punishment, in order to satisfaction, is a valuable consideration, and, therefore, a price for the redemption of man out of the hands of Satan, and

from all the consequences of that captivity. (Vide Stillingfleet's Discourses on the Sufferings, &c.)

Under this head, now that we are showing that the death of Christ is exhibited in Scripture as the price of our redemption, it may also be necessary to meet another objection, that this doctrine of purchase and commutation is inconsistent with that freeness of the grace of God in the forgiveness of sins, on which so great a stress is laid in the Scriptures. This objection has been

urged from Socinus to Dr. Priestley, and is thus stated by the latter: (History of the Corruptions;)

"The Scriptures uniformly represent God as our universal parent, pardoning sinners freely, that is, from his natural goodness and mercy, whenever they repent and reform their lives. All the declarations of Divine mercy are made, without reserve and limitation, to the truly penitent, through all the books of Scripture, without the most distant hint of any regard being

had to the sufferings or merit of any being whatever." The proofs which he gives for this bold, and, indeed, impudent position, are chiefly the declaration of the apostle, that we are justified freely by the grace of God, and he contends that the word freely "implies that forgiveness is the free gift of God, and proceeds from his essential goodness and mercy, without regard to any foreign consideration whatever" It is singular, however, that the position, as Dr. Priestley has put it in

the above quotations, refutes itself; for even he restricts the exercise of this mercy of God," to the truly penitent," "to them who repent and reform their lives." Forgiveness, therefore, is not, even according to him and his followers, free in the sense of unconditional; and at the very time he denies that pardon is bestowed by God," without regard to any consideration whatever, foreign to his essential goodness and mercy," he acknowledges that it is regulated, in its exercise, by the

consideration of the penitence or non-penitence of the guilty, who are the subjects of it, from which the contradictory conclusion follows, that, in bestowing mercy, God has respect to a consideration foreign to his goodness and mercy, even the penitence of man, so that there is, in the mode of dispensing mercy, a reserve and limitation on the part of God.

Thus, then, unless they would let in all kinds of license, by preaching an unconditional pardon, the

Socinians are obliged to acknowledge, that a thing may be done freely, which is, nevertheless, not done unconditionally. For, as it was replied, of old, to Socinus, whom Dr. Priestley follows in this objection, if this be not acknowledged, then the grossest Antinomianism is the true doctrine. For, if forgiveness of sin can only be accounted a free gift by being dependent upon no condition, and subject to no restrictions, it follows, that the repentance and amendment of the offender himself are no more to be

regarded than the sufferings and merit of any other being; and, consequently, that all sinners, without reserve or limitation, have an equal claim of pardon, whether they repent or not. If, to avoid this consequence, it be said that God is free to choose the objects to whom he will show mercy, and to impose upon them such restrictions, and to require of them such qualifications as he thinks fit; it may then, with equal reason, be asserted, that he is also free to dispense his mercy for such reasons and by such

methods as he, in his wisdom, shall determine to be most conducive to his own glory and the good of his creatures, and there is no reason whatever to be given why a regard to the sufferings or merit of another person should more destroy the freeness of the gift, than the requisition of certain qualifications in the object himself. (Vide Veysies' Bampton Lectures.) Thus the argument urged in the objection proves as much against the objectors as it does against us, or rather it proves nothing against

either: for the showing mercy to the guilty, by any method, was a matter in which almighty God was perfectly free. He might have exacted the penalty of his violated law upon the sinning individual; and to forgive sin, in any manner, was, in him, therefore, an act of unspeakable grace and favor. Again, from the mode and limitation of dispensing this grace and favor, he derives no advantage (for the gratificatio n of his own benevolence is not a question of interest) in the whole transaction; both in

the mercy dispensed and in the mode the benefit of the creature is kept in view; nor could the persons pardoned themselves furnish any part of the consideration on which they are pardoned, or, of themselves, perform the conditions required of them; so that, for all these reasons, the pardon of man is a free gift, and its mode of being dispensed is the proof that it is so, and not a proof to the contrary.

But the very passage of St. Paul, to which Dr. Priestley refers, when he contends

that the doctrine of the New Testament is, "that forgive, ness is the free gift of God, and proceeds from his essential goodness and mercy, without regard to any foreign consideration whatever," refutes his inference. The passage is, "being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus." The same doctrine is taught in other passages; and so far is it from being true, that no reference is made to any consideration beyond the mere goodness and mercy of God, that consideration

is stated in so many express words, "through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;" of which redemption the blood of Christ is the price, as taught in the text above commented on. But though it was convenient, in order to render a bold assertion more plausible, to keep this out of sight, a little reflection might have shown, that the argument built upon the word freely, the term used by the apostle, proceeds upon an entire mistake. The expression has reference to ourselves and to our own

exertions in the work of justification, not to any thing which has been done by another in our behalf; and it is here used to denote the manner in which the blessing is bestowed, not the means by which it was procured. "Being justified freely by his grace"- ; freely, in the original dorean, in the way of a gift unmerited by us, and not in the way of a reward for our worthiness or desert, agreeably to the assertion of the apostle in another place, "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but

according to his mercy he saved us." To be justified, is to be pardoned, and treated as righteous in the sight of God, and to be admitted thus into his favor and acceptance. But man, in his fallen state, had nothing in himself, and could do nothing of himself, by which he might merit, or claim as his due so great a benefit.

Having, therefore, no pretensions to real righteousness, our absolution from the guilt of sin, and our admission to the character and privileges

of righteous persons, must be imputed not to our merit, but to the grace of God; it is an act of mercy which we must acknowledge and receive as a free gift, and not demand as a just reward. Nor do the means by which our justification was affected in any respect alter its nature as a gift, or in the least diminish its freedom. "We are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ;" but this redemption was not procured by us, nor provided at our expense. It

was the result of the pure love of God, who, compassionating our misery, himself provided the means of our deliverance, by sending his only-begotten Son into the world, who voluntarily submitted to die upon the cross, that he might become the propitiation for our sins, and reconcile us to God. Thus is the whole an entire act of mercy on the part of God and Christ; begun and completed for our benefit, but without our intervention; and, therefore, with respect to us, the pardon of sin must

still be accounted a gift, though it comes to us through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ.

Equally unfounded is the argument built upon the passages in which the forgiveness of sins is represented under the notion of the free remission of a debt; in which act, it is said, there is no consideration of atonement and satisfaction. When sin is spoken of as a debt, a metaphor is plainly employed, and it would be a novel rule to interpret what is plainly literal by

what is metaphorical. There is, undoubtedly, something in the act of forgiving sin which is common with the act of remitting a debt by a creditor, or there would be no foundation for the metaphor; but it can by no means legitimately follow, that the remission of sins is, in all its circumstances, to be interpreted by all the circumstances which accompany the free remission of a debt. We know on the contrary, that remission of sins is not unconditional; repentance and faith are required in

order to it, which is acknowledged by the Socinians themselves. But this acknowledgment is fatal to the argument they would draw from the instances in the New Testament, in which almighty God is represented as a merciful creditor, freely forgiving his insolvent debtors; for if the act of remitting sins be in all respects like the act of forgiving debts, then indeed can neither repentance, nor faith, nor condition of any kind, be insisted upon in order to forgiveness; since, in the

instances referred to, the debtors were discharged without any expressed condition at all.

But something, also, previous to our repentance and faith, is constantly connected in the Holy Scriptures of the New Testament with' the very offer of forgiveness. "It behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead on the third day," that "repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations." It was necessary, as we have already seen,

that the one should take place before the other could be announced; and some degree of necessity is allowed in the case, even on the Socinian hypothesis, although a very subordinate one. But if by an act of prerogative alone, unfettered by any considerations of justice and right, as is a creditor when he freely forgives a debt, God forgives sins, then there could be no necessity of any conceivable kind for "Christ to suffer;" and the offer of remission of sins would, in that case, have

been wholly independent of his sufferings, which is contrary to the text. In perfect accordance with the above passage, is that in Acts 13:38, where it is said, "Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this man, (dia toutou, through the means of this man,) is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins." Here the same means as those before mentioned by St. Luke, are obviously referred to, "the death and resurrection of Christ." Still more expressly, Matt. 26:28, our Lord declares

that his blood is "the blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins;" where he plainly makes his blood the procuring cause of that remission, and a necessary libation in order to its being attainable. Our redemption is said by St.

Paul, Ephes. 1:7, to be, "through his blood," and this redemption he explains to be "the remission of our sins;" and in writing, to the Hebrews he lays it down, as that very principle of the Old Testament dispensation

which made it typical of the New, that "without shedding of blood there was no remission." This remission, is, nevertheless, for the reasons given above, always represented as a free act of the Divine mercy; for the apostles saw no inconsistency in giving to it this free and gracious character on the one hand, and on the other proclaiming, that that free and adorable mercy was called into exercise by the "chastisement of our sins being laid upon Christ;" and thus by uniting both, they broadly and infallibly

distinguish "the act of a lawgiver, who in forgiving sins has respect to the authority of the law, and the act of a creditor, who in remitting a debt disposes of his property at his pleasure."

But although no criticism can be more fallacious than to interpret the forgiveness of sins, which is a plain and literal transaction, by a metaphor, or a parable, which may have either too few or too many circumstances interwoven with it for just illustration, when applied beyond, or

contrary to, its intention, the reason of the metaphor is at once obvious and beautiful. The verb aphesis, is the word commonly used for the remission of sins and the remission of debts. It signifies to send away dismiss; and is accommodated to both these acts. The ideas of absolute right in one party, and of binding obligation on the other, hold good equally as to the lawgiver and the transgressor, the creditor and the debtor. The lawgiver has a right to demand obedience, the creditor to demand his

property; the transgressor of law is under the bond of its penalty, the debtor is under the obligation of repayment or imprisonment. This is the basis of the comparison between debts of money, and obligations of obedience to a lawgiver; and the same word is equally well applied to express the canceling of each, though, except in the respects just stated, they are transactions and relations very different to each other. Every sin involves an obligation to punishment; and when sin

is dismissed, sent away, or in other words forgiven, the liability to punishment is removed, just as when a debt is dismissed, sent away, or in other words remitted, the obligation of repayment, and, in default of that, the obligation of imprisonment, or, according to the ancient law, of being sold as a slave, is removed with it. So far the resemblance goes; but the Scriptures themselves, by connecting pardon of sin with a previous atonement, prevent it from being carried farther. And, in-

deed, the reason of the case sufficiently shows the difference between the remitting of a debt, which is the act of a private man, and the par-don of transgressions against a public law, which is the act of a magistrate; between an act which affects the private interests of one, and an act, which, in its bearing upon the authority of the public law and the protection and welfare of society, affects the interests of many; in a word, between an act which is a matter of mere feeling, and in which rectoral justice

can have no place, and one which must be harmonized with rectoral justice; for compassion to the guilty can never be the leading rule of government.

6. The nature of the death of Christ is still farther explained in the New Testament, by the manner in which it connects our justification with "faith in the blood," the sufferings which Christ endured in our stead; and both our justification, and the death of Christ as its meritorious cause, with "the righteousness or God."

According to the testimony of the whole of the evangelic writers, the justification of man is an act of the highest grace, a manifestation of the superlative and ineffable love of God, and is, at the same time a strictly Righteous proceeding.

These views, scattered throughout the books of the New Testament, are summed up in the following explicit language of St. Paul, Rom. 3:24-26: "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in

Christ Jesus. Whom God hath set forth as a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." The argument of the apostle is exceedingly lucid. He treats of man's justification before God, of which he mentions two methods. The first is by our own obedience to the law of

God, on the principle of all righteous law, that obedience secures exemption from punishment; or, as he expresses it, chap, 10:5, "For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, that the man which doeth these things shall live by them,"

This method of justification he proves to be impossible to man in his present state of degeneracy, and from the actual transgressions of Jews and Gentiles, on account of which "the whole world"

is guilty before God; and he therefore lays it down as an incontrovertible maxim, that "by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified," since "by the law is the knowledge of sin;" for which it provides no remedy. The other method is justification by the grace of God, as a "free gift;" but coming to us through the intervention of the death of Christ, as our redemption price; and received instrumentally by our faith in him. "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ." He then

immediately adds, "whom God hath set forth,"

openly exhibited and publicly announced, "to be a propitiation;" to be the person through whose voluntary and vicarious sufferings he is reconciled to sinful man, and by whom he will justify all who "through faith" confide "in" the virtue of "his blood," shed for the remission of sins. But this public announcement and setting forth of Christ as a propitiation was not only for a declaration of the Divine mercy; but pardon

was offered to men in this method, to declare the

"righteousness" of God, (eis endeixin dikaiosunees autou) for a demonstration of his righteousness or justice, in the remission of past sins; "that he might be just and yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus" - that he might show himself to be strictly and inviolably righteous in the administration of his government, even while he justifies the offender that believes in Jesus. The Socinian version renders the clause, "to declare his

righteousness for the remission of sins," to show his method of justification concerning the remission of past sins.

Even then the strict rectoral justice of the act of justifying sinners, through faith in the blood of Christ, is expressed by the following clause," that he might be JUST;" but the sense of the whole passage requires the literal rendering," to declare his justice, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." Some have indeed

taken the word "just" (dikaios) in the sense of merciful; but this is wholly arbitrary. It occurs, says Whitby, above eighty times in the New Testament, and not once in that sense. (9) The sense just given is confirmed by all the ancient versions, and it is indeed put beyond the reach of verbal criticism by the clause, "for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God," For, whatever view we take of this clause, whether we refer it to the sins of men before the coming of

Christ, or to the past sins of one who is at any time justified, the paresis, or "passing over" of sins, or, if the common rendering please better, "the remission of sins," and the "forbearance of God," are acts of obvious mercy; and to say that thus the mercy of God is manifested, is tautological and identical; whereas past sins not punished through the forbearance of God, without a public atonement, might have brought the justice of God into question, but certainly not his mercy. It was the

justice of the proceeding, therefore, that needed a demonstration, and not the mercy of it. This, too, is the obvious reason for the repetition so emphatically used by the apostle, and which is no otherwise to be accounted for; "to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God, to declare, I say, at this time, his righteousness;" "at this time," now that Christ has actually appeared to pay the ransom, and to become the publicly announced propitiation for sin; God

cannot now appear otherwise than just, although he justifies him that believeth in Jesus. Similar language is also used by St. John 1st Epistle, 1:9, "He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." - So that the grand doctrine of Christianity is unequivocally stated by both apostles to be, that, according to its constitution, the forgiveness of sin is at once an act of mercy and an act of justice, or of strictly righteous government. Neither the Socinian nor the Arian hypothesis, at all

harmonizes with this principle; on the contrary, they both directly contradict it, and cannot, therefore, be true. They make the forgiveness of sin, indeed, an act of mercy: but with them it is impossible that it should be an act of justice, because sin receives not its threatened punishment; the penalty of the law is not exacted; the offender meets with entire impunity; and the Divine administration, so far from being a righteous one, has, according to their system, no respect to either truth or

righteousness; and, so far as offences against the Divine law are concerned, that law is reduced to a dead letter.

(9) See Nare's Remarks on the New Version, Magee on the Atonement, Whit, by and Doddridge in loc. Righteousness is indeed sometimes used for veracity; but only when some principle of equity, or some obligation arising from engagement, promise, or threat, is implied.

But in Scripture the doctrine of forgiveness of sins, through the

propitiatory sacrifice of Christ, is not only asserted to be a demonstration of the righteousness of God in a case which might seem to bring it into question, but the particular steps and parts of this "demonstration" are, by its light, easy to be traced. For,

1. The law, the rule of the Divine government, is by this means established in its authority and perpetuity. The hypothesis which rejects the doctrine of the atonement, repeals the law by giving impunity to transgression; for, if

punishment does not follow offence, or no other term of pardon be required than one which the culprit has it always in his own power, at once, to offer, (which we have seen is the case with the repentance stated by Socinians as the only condition of forgiveness,) then is the law, as to its authority, virtually repealed, and the Divine government, over rebellious creatures, annihilated. The Christian doctrine of atonement, on the contrary, is, that sin cannot go unpunished in the Divine administration,

and, therefore, the authority of the law is established by this absolute and everlasting exclusion of impunity from transgression.

2. Whether we take the righteousness or justice of God, for that holiness and rectitude of his nature from which his punitive justice flows; or for the latter, which consists in exacting the penalty righteously and wisely attached to offences against the Divine law, or for both united as the stream and the fountain; it is demonstrated, by the

refusal of impunity to sin, that God is this holy and righteous Being, this strict and exact Governor. On any other theory, there is no manifestation of God's hatred of sin, answering at all to that intense holiness of his nature, which must lead him to abhor it; and no proof of his rectoral justice as Governor of the world. Mercy is, according to them all, ad-ministered on a mere principle of feeling, without any regard to holiness or justice whatever.

3. The doctrine which connects the pardon of the guilty with the meritorious death of Christ, illustrates the attribute of Divine justice, by the very act of connecting and blending it with the attribute of love, and the exercise of an effectual compassion. At the time that it guards with so much care, the doctrine of non-impunity to sin, it offers impunity to the sinner; but then the medium through which this offer is made serves to heighten the impression of God's hatred to sin, and the inflexible character of his

justice. The person appointed to suffer the punishment of sin and the penalty of the law for us, was not a mere human being, not a creature of any kind, however exalted, but the Son of God; and in him Divinity and humanity were united in one person, so that he was "God manifested in the flesh," assuming our nature in order that he might offer it in death a sacrifice to God. If this was necessary, and we have already proved it to have been so in the strictest sense, then is sin declared, by the strongest

demonstration we can conceive, to be an evil of immeasurable extent; and the justice of God is, by a demonstration of equal force, declared to be inflexible and inviolable. God "spared not his own Son."

Here, indeed, it has been objected by Socinus and his followers, that the dignity of a person adds nothing to the estimation of his sufferings. The common opinion of mankind, in all ages, is, however, a sufficient refutation of this objection, for in proportion

to the excellence of the creatures immolated in sacrifice have the value and efficacy of oblations been estimated by all people; which notion, when perverted, made them resort, in some instances, to human sacrifices, in cases of great extremity; and surely, if the principle of substitution existed in the penal law of any human government, it would be universally felt to make a great difference in the character of the law, whether an honorable or a mean substitute were exacted in place of the

guilty; and that it would have greatly changed the character of the act of Zaleucus, the Locrian lawgiver, before mentioned, and placed the estimation in which he held his own laws, and the degree of strictness with which he was determined to uphold them, in a very different light, if, instead of parting with one of his own eyes, in place of the remaining eye of his son, he had ordered the eye of some base slave or of a malefactor to be plucked out, But with-out entering into this, the notion will be

explicitly refuted, if we turn to the testimony of Holy Writ itself, in which the dignity and Divinity of our Lord are so often emphatically referred to as stamping that value upon his sacrifice, as giving that consideration to his voluntary sufferings on our account, which we usually express by the term of "his merits," Acts 20:28, as God, he is said to have "purchased the Church with his own blood." In Colos. 1:14, 15, we are said to have "redemption through HIS BLOOD, who is THE IMAGE OF THE

INVISIBLE GOD." In 1 Cor. 2:8, "the lord of glory is said to have been crucified." St. Peter emphatically calls the blood of Christ "precious BLOOD;"

and St. Paul dwells particularly upon this peculiarity, when he contrasts the sacrifice of Christ with those of the law, and when he ascribes that purifying efficacy, which he denies to the blood of bulls and of goats, to the blood of Christ. "How much more shall the blood of christ, who

through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God." By the argument of Socinus there could be no difference between the blood of animals, shed under the law, as to value and efficacy, and the blood of Christ, which is directly in the teeth of the declaration and argument of the apostle, who also asserts, that the patterns of things in the heavens were purified by animal sacrifices; "but the heavenly things them,

selves with better sacrifices than these," namely, the oblation of Christ.

To another objection of Socinus, that because the Divinity itself suffers not, therefore it does not enter into this consideration of punishment, Grotius well replies, This is as much as to say that it is an offence of the same kind whether you strike a private person or a king, a stranger or a father, because blows are directed against the body, not against dignity or relationship. (1) (1) "Quod autem Socinus

argumentatur, quia divinitas ipsa non patiatur, ideo hanc in paenae considerationem non venire; perinde est ac si dicas, nihil referre privatum an Regem, item ignotum, an patrem verberes, quia verbera in corpus dirigantur, non in dignitatum, aut cognationem." (De Satisfactione.)

4. In farther considering this subject, as illustrating the inherent and the rectoral righteousness of God, we are to recollect that, although by the

atonement made for the sins of mankind by the death of Christ, all men, antecedently to their repentance and faith, are, to use the language of divines, put into "a salvable state," yet none of them are by this act of Christ, brought from under the authority of the moral law. This remains in its full and original force, and as they all continue under the original obligation of obedience, so in case of those conditions not being complied with, on which the actual communication of the benefit of

redemption has been made to depend, those who neglect the great salvation offered to them by Christ, fall under the full original penalty of the law, and are left to its malediction, without obstruction to the exercise and infliction of Divine justice. Nor, with respect to those who perform the conditions required of them, and who, by faith in Christ, are justified, and thus escape punishment, is there any repeal, or even relaxation, of the authority of the law of God. The end of justification is not to set

men free from law, but from punishment; for, concomitant with justification, though distinct from it, is the communication of the regenerating grace of the Holy Spirit, by which the corrupt and invalid nature of man is restored to the love of holiness and the power to practice it, and thus the law of God becomes his constant rule, and the measure of that holiness to which, when this new creation has taken place, he vigorously aspires: "For what the law could not do, in that it was

weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Not, indeed, that this obedience, which, in the present life, is, in some respects, imperfect, and in every degree the result of the operation of God within us, can, after this change, be the rule of our continued justification and acceptance; that will rest, from first to last, upon the

atonement of Christ, pleaded in our behalf; so that, if any man again sin, "he has an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;" but true faith leads, by an inseparable connection, both to justification and to regeneration; and they who, as the apostle argues, Romans 6:2, are thus "dead to sin, cannot continue any longer therein," but yield willing obedience to the law of God, The rule of God, the authority of his law is thus re-established over his creatures, and the strictness of a righteous

government is united with the exercise of a tender mercy.

Thus, then, in the doctrine of the atonement of Christ, we see how the righteousness, the essential and the rectoral justice, of God is manifested. There is no impunity to sin; and yet the impunity to the sinner, through faith in the blood of Christ, does not repeal, does not lower, but establish the law of God. These views will also enable us to attach an explicit meaning to the theological phrase," the

satisfaction made to Divine justice," by which the nature of Christ's atonement is often expressed. This is not a phrase of Holy Writ; but it is not, on that account, to be disregarded, since, like many others, it has been found useful as a guard against subtle evasions of the doctrine of Scripture, and in giving explicitness, not, indeed, to the language of inspiration, but to the sense in which that language is interpreted.

The two following views of satisfaction may be given

as those which are most prevalent among those divines who hold the doctrine of the atonement of Christ.

The first may be thus epitomized:-

The justice of God being concerned to vindicate his laws, and to inflict upon offenders the due reward of their evil deeds, it is agreed that, without proper satisfaction, sin could not be forgiven.

For, as sin is opposite to the purity and holiness of God, and, consequently,

cannot but provoke his displeasure; and, as justice is essential to the Divine nature, and exists there in a supreme degree, it must, inflexibly, require the punishment of those who are thus objects of his wrath.

The satisfaction, therefore, made by the death of Christ consisted in his taking the place of the guilty; and in his sufferings and death being, from the dignity of his nature, regarded by the offended Lawgiver, as a full equivalent and adequate compensation for the

punishment by death, of the personally guilty.

The second opinion does not assume the absolute necessity of a satisfaction to Divine justice, but chiefly insists upon the wisdom and fitness of the measure, arguing, that it became the almighty Governor of the universe to consult the honor of his law, and not to suffer it to be violated with impunity, lest his subjects should call in question his justice. Accordingly, he sent his own Son into the world, who, by dying for our sins,

obtained our release from punishment; and, at the same time, made an honorable display of the righteousness of God. In a word, Christ is supposed, in this opinion, to have made satisfaction for our sins, not because his death is to be accounted an adequate compensation, or a full equivalent for the remission of punishment; but because his suffering in our stead maintained the honor of the Divine law, and yet gave free scope to the mercy of the Lawgiver.

Both these opinions have great names for their advocates; but the reader will feel, that there is too much indistinctness in the terms and phrases in which they are expressed for either of them to be received as a satisfactory enunciation of this important doctrine. The first opinion, though greatly to be preferred, and with proper explanations, just, is defective in not explaining what is meant by the terms "a full equivalent" and "an adequate compensation." The second is

objectionable, as appearing to refer the atonement more to wisdom and fitness as an expedient, than to wisdom and fitness in close and inseparable connection with justice; and is defective in not pointing out what that connection between the death of Christ and that honoring of the law of God is, which allows of the remission of punishment to offenders, of which they speak. Each embodies much truth, and yet both are capable of originating great and fatal errors, unless their terms

be definitely and Scripturally understood.

To clear this subject some farther observations will, then, be necessary.

The term satisfaction is taken from the Roman law, and signifies to content a person aggrieved, by doing or by offering something which procures liberation from the obligation of debts or the penalties of offences; not ipso facto, but by the will of the aggrieved party admit-ting this substitution. "Ea dictio (satisfaciendi vocabulum) in jure et usu communi

significat facti alicujus aut rei exhibitionem, ex qua non quidem ipso facto, sed accedente vountatis actu liberatio sequatur; soletque non tantum in pecuniaris debitis, sed et in delictis hoc sensu usurpari, quod linquae ex Romana depravatae appellant, aliquem contentare" (Grotius De Satisfactione.) So the Roman lawyer Caius, "satisfacere dicimur ei cujus desiderium implemus," we are said to satisfy him whose desires we fulfill. Ulpian opposes satisfaction to payment, "satisfactio pro solutione;"

and, in criminal cases, Asconius lays it down as a rule, "satisfacere, est tantum facere, quantum satis sit irato ad vindictam," to satisfy is to do as much as, to the party offended, may be enough in the way of vengeance. (Vide Chapman's Eusebius.) It is from this use of the term that it has been adopted into theology, and however its meaning may have been heightened or lowered by the advocates of different systems, it is plain that, by the term itself, nothing is indicated, but the

contentment of the injured party by any thing which he may choose to accept in the place of the enforcement of his obligation upon the party indebted or offending. The sense in which it must be applied to designate the nature and effect of the death of Christ, in consistency with the views we have already taken, is obvious. We call the death of Christ a satisfaction offered to Divine justice for the transgressions of men, with reference to its effect upon the mind of the supreme Lawgiver. As a just

Governor, he is satisfied, contented with the atonement offered by the vicarious death of his Son, and the conditions on which it is to become available to the offenders; and their punishment, those conditions being accomplished, is no longer exacted.

This effect upon the mind of the Lawgiver is not, as the Socinians would pervert the doctrine, the satisfaction of an angry, vengeful affection, as we have before shown; but, according to the very

phrase employed in all cases, and which is sufficient to show that their perversion of our meaning is willful, "a satisfaction," or "contentment" of his justice, which means, and can only rationally mean, the satisfaction of the mind of a just or righteous governor, disposed from the goodness of his nature, to show mercy to the guilty, and who can now do it consistently with the rectitude of his character, and the authority of his laws, which it is the office of punitive justice to proclaim, and to uphold,

The satisfaction of Divine justice by the death of Christ, consists, therefore, in this, that this wise and gracious provision on the part of the Father having been voluntarily carried into effect by the Son, the just God has determined it to be as consistent with his own holy and righteous character, and the ends of law and government, to forgive all who have true "faith in the blood of Christ," the appointed propitiation for sin, as though they had all been personally punished for their transgressions.

The death of Christ, then, is the satisfaction accepted; and this being a satisfaction to justice, that is, a consideration which satisfied God, as a being essentially righteous, and as having strict and inflexible respect to the justice of his government; pardon through, or for the sake of that death, became, in consequence, "a declaration of the righteousness of God," as the only appointed method of remitting the punishment of the guilty; and if so, satisfaction respects not, in the first

instance, according to the second opinion we have stated above, the honor of the law of God, but its authority, and the upholding of that righteous and holy character of the Lawgiver, and of his administration, of which that law is the visible and public expression. Nor is this to be regarded as a merely wise and ft expedient of government, a point to which even Grotius leans too much, as well as many other divines who have adopted the second opinion; for this may imply that it was one of many

other possible expedients, though the best; whereas we have seen, that it is every where in Scripture represented as necessary to human salvation; and that it is to be concluded, that no alternative existed but that of exchanging a righteous government for one careless and relaxed, to the dishonor of the Divine attributes, and the sanctioning of moral disorder; or the upholding of such a government by the personal and extreme punishment of every offender; or else the acceptance of the vicarious

death of an infinitely dignified and glorious being, through whom pardon should be offered, and in whose hands a process for the moral restoration of the lapsed should be placed. The humiliation, sufferings, and death of such a being, did most obviously demonstrate the righteous character and administration of God; and if the greatest means we can conceive was employed for this end, then we may safely conclude, that the righteousness of God, in the forgiveness of sin,

could not have been demonstrated by inferior means; and as God cannot cease to be a righteous Governor, man, in that case, could have had no hope.

The advocates of the second opinion not only speak of the honor of the Divine law being concerned in this transaction; but of the maintenance of the justice of God, in which they come substantially to an agreement with those who hold the first opinion; and if so, there appears no reason to except to such

phrases as a "full equivalent" and "an adequate compensation," when soberly interpreted. An equivalent is some, thing of equal value, or of equal force and power, to something else; but here the value spoken of is judicial value, that which is to weigh equally in the mind of a wise, benevolent, and yet strictly righteous Governor; and if the death of Christ for sinners was determined, in his infallible judgment, to be as equal a "demonstration" of his justice, as the personal and extreme punishment of

offenders themselves, it was, in this judicial consideration of the matter, of equal weight, and therefore of equal value, as a means of righteous government; for which reason, also, it was of equal force, or power, or cogency, another leading sense of the term equivalent. So also, as to the term "compensation," which signifies the weighing of one thing against another, the making amends. If this be interpreted as the former, judicially, the death of Christ for sinners is an

adequate compensation for their personal punishment, in the estimation of Divine justice; because it is, at least, an equally powerful demonstration of the righteousness of God, who only in consideration of that atonement forgives the sins of offending men.

Just, however, and significant as these phrases are when thus interpreted, one reason why they have been objected to by some orthodox divines is, that they have been used in support of the Antinomian doctrine. On this account

they have been by some wholly rejected, and a loose and dangerous phraseology introduced, when the reason of the case only required that they should be explained. The Antinomian perversion of them may here be briefly refuted, though that doctrine will afterward come under our more direct consideration.

In the first place the Antinomians connect the satisfaction of Christ, with the doctrine of the imputation of his active righteousness to believers.

With them, therefore, the satisfaction of Christ means his performing for us that obedience which we were bound to perform. They consider our Lord as a proxy for men; so that his perfect obedience to the law should be esteemed by God, as done by them; as theirs in legal construction, and that his perfect righteousness being imputed to them, renders them legally righteous and sinless. The plain answer to this is, 1. That we have no such office ascribed in Scripture to the active righteousness of Christ,

which is only spoken of there in connection with his atonement, as rendering him a fit victim or sacrifice for sin - "he died, the just for the unjust." 2. That this doctrine of the imputation of Christ's obedience makes his sufferings superfluous. For if he has done all that the law required of us, and if this is legally accounted our doing, then are we under no penalty of suffering, and his suffering in our stead was more than the law and the case required. 3. That this involves a fiction

opposed to the ends of moral government, and shuts out the obligation of personal obedience to the law of GOD; so far, therefore, is it from being a demonstration of God's righteousness, his rectoral justice, that it transfers the obligation of obedience from the subjects of the Divine government to Christ, and leaves man without law, and God without dominion, which is obviously contrary to the Scriptures, and favorable to license of every kind.

4. This is not satisfaction in any good sense; it is merely the performance of all that the law requires by one person substituted for another.

Again, the terms full satisfaction and full equivalent, are taken by the Antinomians in the sense of the payment of debts by a surety for him who has not the means of payment; as though sins were analogous to civil debts. This proceeds upon the mistake of confounding the cancel-ling of a debt of judicial obligation, with the

payment of a debt of money. We have already seen the difference between the relation of a sinner to his offended Judge and Sovereign, and that of a pecuniary debtor to a creditor, and have pointed out the basis of the metaphor, when it occurs as a figurative representation in Scripture. Such payment would not be satisfaction in the proper sense, which stands opposed to payment, and means the acceptance of something in the place of what is due, with which the Lawgiver is

content. Nor can any such sense be forced upon the term satisfaction, for we have no such representation in Scripture of the death of Christ, as that it is, in principle, like the payment of so many talents or pounds by one person, for so many talents or pounds owing by another, and which thereby cancels all future obligation. His atoning act consisted in suffering, "the just for the unjust;" neither in doing just so many holy acts as we were bound to do, nor in suffering the precise quantum of pain

which we deserved to suffer, neither of which appears in the nature of things to be even possible; but doing and suffering that which by reason of the peculiar glory and dignity of the person thus coming under the bond of the law, both as to obedience and suffering, was accounted by God to be a sufficient

"demonstration of his righteousness," in showing mercy to all who truly believe in him. And as this notion of payment in full and kind by a surety is contrary to the import of

satisfaction, so also is it inconsistent with the import of the phrase, a full equivalent. He who pays a civil debt in full for another, does not render an equivalent; but gives precisely what the original obligation required, So, if the obedience of Christ were equal in quantity and degree to all the acts of obedience due by men, and is to be accounted theirs, there is no equivalent offered; but the same thing is done, only it is done by another; and if the penal sufferings of Christ were in nature, quantity, and

intenseness, equal to the punishment of all sinners, in time and eternity taken together, and are to be accounted their sufferings, no proper equivalent is offered in the case. The only true sense of the sufferings of Christ being a full equivalent for the remission of the punishment due to the guilty, is, that they equally availed to the satisfying of Divine justice, and vindicating the authority of his laws; that they were equivalent, in the estimation of a just Governor, in the

administration of his laws, to the punishment of the guilty; equivalent in effect to a legal satisfaction, which would consist in the enforcement upon the persons of the offenders of the penalty of the violated commandment.

Another consequence to which the Antinomian view leads, is, that it makes the justification of men a matter of right, not of grace.

We can easily, when the doctrine of satisfaction is properly stated, answer the infidel and Socinian

objection, that it destroys the free and gracious nature of an act of forgiveness, For, not to urge again what has before been advanced, that the Father was the fountain of this mercy, and "gave" the Son; the satisfaction was quid recusabile, or such as God might have refused. For if the laws, under which God had placed us, were "holy, just, and good," which is their real character, and if the penalties attached to their violation were righteous, which must also be conceded, then it would

have been righteous, every way consistent with the glory of God, and with every perfection of his nature, to have enforced the penalty. The satisfaction offered might not be unjust in him to accept, and yet he was clearly under no obligation to accept it could it have been offered independent of himself, much less could he be under any obligation to provide it, which he did. The offender could have no right to claim such a provision, and it depended, therefore, solely on the will

of God, and as such was an act of the highest grace.

Again, the forgiveness of sinners, through an atonement, is not de jure, that which can be claimed as a matter of right. It is made to consist with law, but is not in any sense by the law.

However valuable the atonement, yet, independent of the favor and grace of the Lawgiver, it could not have obtained our pardon. Both must concur in order to this, the kindness and compassion of the being offended

inducing him to accept satisfaction, and such a satisfaction as would render it morally fit and honorable in him to offer forgiveness. "By grace," therefore, we

"are saved;" and nothing that Christ has done, renders us not deserving of punishment, or cancels our obligations as creatures and subjects, as a surety cancels the obligations of a debtor, whose debt he pays for him. Forgiveness in God can, therefore, be no other than an act of high and distinguished mercy.

We are also to consider, even now that the atonement has been accepted, and the promise of forgiveness proclaimed, upon the conditions of repentance and faith, that we claim forgiveness not on the ground of justice, but on that of the faithfulness of God, who has been pleased to, bind himself by promises; and also that the mercy and grace of God are farther illustrated by his not proceeding to extremities against us upon our first refusals of his overtures, of which all are in some degree guilty. He

exercises toward us, in all cases, "all long suffering," and calls us not hastily to account for our neglect of the Gospel, any more than for the infractions of his law, both which he might do, were his government severe and his mercy reluctant.

But abundantly as the objection may thus be answered, it is not to be satisfactorily refuted, on the Antinomian principle, that Christ paid our debt, in the sense of yielding to the law, in End and in quantity, those acts of

obedience, or that penalty of suffering, or both, which the law required. The matter in that case, on the part of the Father, loses its character of grace, and is reduced to a strictly equitable proceeding; or at least the mercy is of no higher a kind than is the mercy of a creditor who accepts the full amount of his debt from the surety instead of the debtor, which is assuredly much below that love of the Father, to which allusions so admiring and so grateful are often made in the New Testament. The

consequences, also, become absurd and wholly contradictory to the Scriptures; and such a view of the satisfaction of Christ is inconsistent with conditions of pardon and acceptance; for if the debt is in this sense actually tendered and accepted, on what ground can conditions of release stand? It is, therefore, consistent in the Antinomian scheme, to deny all conditions of pardon and acceptance, and to make repentance and faith merely the means through which men come

to the knowledge of their previous and eternal election. By them, as fulfilled conditions, their relation to God is not changed, so that from guilty and condemned criminals they become sons of God, Such they were previous to faith, and previous even to birth, and thus the Scripture is contradicted, which represents believers before repentance and faith, to be "the children of wrath, even as others."

That passage also in Galatians loses its

meaning, "we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ."

With such explanations of the terms of the first of the two opinions on the satisfaction of Christ, above given, it may be taken as fully accordant with the doctrine of the New Testament on this important subject.

Another remark may here be in its proper place. It has been some-times said by theologians, sufficiently sound in their general views of the doctrine of the

atonement, that we know not the vinculum, or bond of connection, between the sufferings of Christ, and the pardon of sin, and this, therefore, they place among the mysteries of religion. To me this appears rather to arise from obscure views of the atonement than from the absence of information on this point in the Scriptures themselves. Mysteries of love and incomprehensible facts are found, it is true, in the incarnation, humiliation, and sufferings of our Lord; but the vinculum, or connection of

those sufferings appears to be matter of express revelation, when it is declared that the death of Christ was "a demonstration of the righteousness of God," of his righteous character and his just administration, and therefore allowed the honorable exercise of mercy without impeachment of justice, or any repeal or relaxation of his laws. If it be meant, in this allegation of mystery, that it is not discoverable how the death of Christ is as adequate a display of the justice of God, as though

offenders had been personally punished, this also is clearly in opposition to what the apostle has said, in the passage which has been so often referred to, "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness, "eis éndeixin teés dikaiosúnees autau, for a demonstration, or manifestation of his righteousness; nor surely can the particulars before stated in explanation of this point, be well weighed, without our perceiving how gloriously the holiness and

essential rectitude of God, as well as his rectoral justice, were illustrated by this proceeding; this, surely, is manifestation, not mystery.

For, generally speaking, it cannot be a matter of difficulty to conceive how the authority of a law may be upheld, and the justice of its administration made manifest, even when its penalty is exacted in some other way than the punishment of the party offending. When the Locrian legislator voluntarily suffered the

loss of one of his eyes, to save that of his son condemned by his own statutes to lose both, and did this that the law might neither be repealed nor exist without efficacy; who does not see that the authority of his laws was as much, nay more, impressively sanctioned than if his son had endured the full penalty? The case, it is true, has in it nothing parallel to the work of Christ, except in that particular which it is here adduced to illustrate; but it shows that it is not, in all cases, necessary for the

upholding of a firm government that the offender himself should be punished. This is the natural mode of maintaining authority; but not, in all cases, the only one; and, in that of the redemption of man, we see the wisdom of God in its brightest manifestation securing this end, and yet opening to man the door of hope. The strict justice of the case required that the righteous character of the Divine administration should be upheld; but, in fact, by the sufferings of our Lord being made the

only means of pardon, it has received a stamp more legible and impressive than the extreme punishment of offenders, however awful, while it connects love with justice, and presents God to us at once exact in righteousness and affectingly gracious and merciful. "The Judge himself bore the punishment of transgression, while he published an amnesty to the guilty, and thus asserted the authority, and importance, and worth of the law by that very act which beamed forth love

unspeakable, and displayed a compassion which knew no obstacle but the unwillingness of the criminals to accept it. The eternal Word became flesh, and exhibited, in sufferings and in death, that combination of holiness and mercy which, believed, must excite love, and, if loved, must produce resemblance."

(Erskine on Revealed Religion.) "Mercy and truth meet together, righteousness and peace kiss each other." Thus the vinculum, that which

connects the death of Christ with our salvation, is simply the security which it gives to the righteous administration of the Divine government.

An objection is made by the opponents of the doctrine of atonement to the justice of laying the punishment of the guilty upon the innocent, which it will be necessary briefly to consider. The objection resolves itself into an inquiry how far such benevolent interpositions of one per-son for another, as involve sacrifice and

suffering, may go without violating justice; and when the subject is followed in this direction, the objection will be found to be of no weight.

That it has always been held a virtue to endure inconveniences, to encounter danger, and even to suffer for the sake of others, in certain circumstances, cannot be denied, and no one has ever thought of con-trolling such acts by raising any questions as to their justice. Parents and friends not only endure labor and

make sacrifices for their children and connections, but often submit to positive pain in accomplishing that to which their affection prompts them. To save a fellow creature perishing by water or fire, generous minds often expose themselves to great personal risk of life, and even sometimes perish in the attempt; yet the claims of humanity are considered sufficient to justify such deeds, which are never blamed, but always applauded. No man's life we grant, is at his own disposal; but in all cases

where it is agreed that God, the only being who has a right to dispose of life, has left men at liberty to offer their lives for the benefit of others, no one questions the justice of their doing it. Thus, when a patriot army marches to almost certain destruction to defend its coasts from foreign invasion and violence, the established notion that the life of every man is placed by God at the disposal of his country, justifies the hazard. It is still a clearer instance, because matter of revelation, that there are cases in which we ought "to

lay down our lives for the brethren," that is for the Church and the interests of religion in the world.

Christians are called to pursue their duty of instructing, and reforming, and saving others, though, in some cases, the active services into which they may be led will shorten life; and in times of persecution it is obligatory upon them not only to be ready to suffer, but to die, rather than deny Christ, No one questions the justice of this, because all see that the Author and Lord of the

lives of men has given to them the right of thus disposing of life, nor do we ever hear it urged, that it was unjust in him to require them to submit to the pain of racks and fires, an d other modes of violent death, which they certainly did not deserve, and when, as to any crime meriting public and ignominious death, they were, doubtless, innocent. These cases are not adduced as parallel to the death of Christ for sinners; but so far they agree with it that, in the ordinary course of providence, and by express

appointment of God, men suffer and even die for the benefit of others, and in some cases the morally worthy, the comparatively innocent, die for the instruction, and, instrumentally, for the salvation of the unworthy and vicious. There is a similarity in the two cases also in other particulars, as that the suffering danger or death is in both matter of choice, not of compulsion or necessity; and that there is a right in the parties to choose suffering and death, though, as we shall see, this right in benevolent men is

of a different kind to that with which Christ was invested.

Some writers of great eminence on the doctrine of atonement have urged also, in answer to the objection before us, the suffering of persons in consequence of the sins of others, as children on account of the crimes of their parents, both by the natural constitution of things and by the laws of many states; but the subject does not appear to derive any real illustration from these examples; for,

as a modern writer well observes, "the principles upon which the Catholic opinion is defended destroy every kind of similarity between these cases and the sufferings of Christ. In all such instances of the extension of punishment, persons suffer for sins of which they are innocent, but without their consent, in consequence of a constitution under which they are born, and by a disposition of events which they probably lament; and their suffering is not supposed to have any effect in alleviating the evils

incurred by those whose punishment they bear." (Hill's Lectures.)

In all the cases mentioned above, as most in point in this argument, we grant that there is no instance of satisfaction by vicarious punishment; no legal substitution of one person for another.

With respect to human governments, they could not justly adopt this principle in any case. They could not oblige an innocent person to suffer for the guilty, because that would be unjust to him;

they could not accept his offer, were he ever so anxious to become the substitute of another, for that would be unjust to God, since they have no authority from him so to take away the life of one of his creatures, and the person himself has no authority to offer it. With respect to the Divine government, a parallel case is also impossible, because no guilty man could be the substitute for his fellows, his own life being forfeited; and no higher creature could be that substitute, of which we are fully assured

by this, that if it was necessary that Christ, who is infinitely above all creatures, should suffer for us in order that God might be just in justifying the guilty, then his justice could not have been manifested by the interposition of any creature whatever in our behalf, and, therefore, the legal obstacle to our pardon must have remained in full force. There can be no full parallel to this singular and only case; but yet, as to the question of justice, which is here the only point under

consideration, it rests on the same principles as those before mentioned. In the case of St. Paul we see a willing sufferer; he chooses to suffer and to die "for the elect's sake," and that he might publish the Gospel to the world. He knew that this would be his lot, and he glories in the prospect. He gave up cheerfully what might have remained to him of life by the constitution of nature. Was it, then, unjust in God to accept this offering of generous devotedness for the good of mankind, when the offering was in

obedience to his own will? Certainly not. Was it an unjust act toward God, that is, did it violate the right of God over his life, for St. Paul to choose to die for the Gospel? Certainly not. For God had given to him the right of thus disposing of his life, by making it his duty to die for the truth. The same considerations of choice and right unite in the sufferings of our Lord, though the case itself was one of an infinitely higher nature, a circumstance which strengthens but does not change the principle. He was a willing substitute,

and choice was in him abundantly more free and unbiased than it could be in a creature, and for this reason, that he was not a creature. His incarnation was voluntary; and, when incarnate, his sufferings were still a matter of choice; nor was he, in the same sense as his disciples, under the power of men. "No man taketh my life from me; but I lay it down of myself." He had the right of doing so in a sense that no creature could have. He died not only because the Father willed it; not because the right of living

or dying had been conceded to him as a moral trust, as in the case of the apostles; but because, having himself the supreme power of life and death, from his boundless benevolence to man, he willed to die; and thus was there, in this substitution, a concurrence of the Lawgiver, and the consent of the substitute. To say that any thing is unjust) is to say that the rights of some one are invaded; but if, in this case, no right was invaded, than which nothing can be more clear, then was there in the case

nothing of injustice as assumed in the objection. The whole resolves itself, therefore, into a question not of justice, but of the wisdom of admitting a substitute to take the place of the guilty. In the circumstances, first of the willingness of the substitute to submit to the penalty, and secondly of his right thus to dispose of himself, the justice of the proceeding is fully cleared; and the question of wisdom is to be determined by this consideration, whether the end of punishment could be as well answered by this

translation of the penalty to a substitute as if the principals themselves had personally been held to undergo it. This, when the whole evangelical scheme is taken into account, embracing the means and conditions by which that substitution is made available, and the concomitants by which it is attended, as before explained, is also obvious- the law of God is not repealed nor relaxed, but established; those who continue disobedient fall into aggravated condemnation, and those

who avail themselves of the mercy of God thus conceded, are restored to the capacity and disposition of obedience, and that perfectly and eternally in a future state of existence; so that, as the end of punishment is the maintenance of the authority of law and the character of the Lawgiver, this end is even more abundantly accomplished by this glorious interposition of the compassion and adorable wisdom of God our Savior.

So unfounded is this objection to the doctrine of the vicarious sufferings of Christ; to which we may add, that the difficulty of reconciling those sufferings to the Divine justice does not, in truth, lie with us, but with the Socinians. Different opinions, as to the nature and end of those sufferings, neither lessen nor heighten them. The extreme and emphatic sufferings of our Lord is a fact which stands unalterably upon the record of the inspired history. We who regard Christ as suffering by virtue

of a voluntary substitution of himself in our room and stead, can account for such agonies, and, by the foregoing arguments, can reconcile them to justice; but, as our Lord was perfectly and absolutely innocent, as "he did no sin," and was, in this respect, distinguished from all men who ever lived, and who have all sinned, by being entirely "holy and harmless,"

"separated from sinners," how will they reconcile it to Divine justice that he should be thus as pre-

eminent in suffering as he was in virtue, and when, according to them, he sustained a personal character only, and not a vicarious one? For this difficulty they have, and can have no rational solution.

As to the passage in Ezekiel 18:20, which Socinians sometimes urge against the doctrine of Christ's vicarious passion, it is briefly but satisfactorily answered by Grotius. "Socinus objects from Ezekiel, 'The soul that sinneth it shall die; the son

shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son.' But in these words God does not teach us what he must necessarily do; but what [in a particular case] he had freely decreed to do. It no more, therefore, follows from hence, that it is unjust altogether for a son to bear any part of the punishment of his father's crime, than that it is unjust for a sinner not to die. The place itself evinces that God does not here treat of perpetual and immutable right; but of that ordinary course of his

providence which he was determined hereafter to pursue with respect to the Jews, that he might cut off all occasion of com-plaint." (De satisfactione.)

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41 REDEMPTION - SACRIFICES OF THE LAW

It has, then, been established, upon the testimony of various texts, in which the doctrine is laid down, not in the language of metaphor and allusion, but clearly and

expressly, that the death of Christ was vicarious and propitiatory; and that by it a satisfaction was offered to the Divine justice for the transgressions of men; in consideration of which pardon and salvation are offered to them in the Gospel through faith; and I have preferred to adduce these clear and cogent proofs of this great principle of our religion, in the first place, from those passages in the New Testament, in which there are no sacrificial terms, no direct allusions to the atonements of the law, and

other parts of the Levitical piacular system, to show that, independent of the latter class of texts, the doctrine may be established against the Socinians; and, also, that by having first settled the meaning of the leading passages, we may more satisfactorily determine the sense in which the evangelists and apostles use the sacrificial terms of the Old Testament, with reference to the death of Christ, a subject in which, from its nature, the opponents of the atonement, find a freedom

of remark and license of criticism, by which they are apt to mislead and perplex the unwary. This second class of texts, however, when approached by the light of the argument already made good, and exhibited also in that of their own evidence, will afford the most triumphant refutation of the notions of those who, to their denial of the Godhead of our Lord, add a proud and Pharisaic rejection of the sacrificial efficacy of his death.

We shall not, in the first instance, advert to the sacrifices under the patriarchal dispensation, as to the origin of which a difference of opinion exists, a subject on which some remarks will be offered in the sequel. Among the Jews, sacrifices were unquestionably of Divine original; and as terms taken from them are found applied so frequently to Christ and to his sufferings in the New Testament, they serve farther to explain that peculiarity under which, as we have seen, the apostles regarded the death

of Christ, and afford additional proof that it was considered by them as a sacrifice of expiation, as the grand universal sin offering for the whole world.

He is announced by John, his forerunner, as "the lamb of GOD;" and that not with reference to meekness or any other moral virtue; but with an accompanying phrase, which would communicate to a Jew the full sacrificial sense of the term employed - "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." He is

called our passover, sacrificed for us." He is said to have given "himself for us, an (offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet-smelling savor." As a Priest, it was necessary he should have somewhat to offer; and he offered himself, "his own blood," to which is ascribed the washing away of sin, and our eternal redemption. He is declared to have "put away sin by the sacrifice of himself," to have "by himself purged our sins," to have

"sanctified the people by his own blood," to have "offered to God one sacrifice for sins." Add to these, and innumerable other similar expressions and allusions, the argument of the apostle in the Epistle to the Hebrews, in which, by proving at length, that the sacrifice of Christ was superior in efficacy to the sacrifices of the law, he most unequivocally assumes, that the death of Christ was a sacrifice and sin offering, for without that it would no more have been capable of comparison with the

sacrifices of the law, than the death of John the Baptist, St. Stephen, or St. James, all martyrs and sufferers for the truth, who had recently sealed their testimony with their blood. This very comparison, we may boldly affirm, is utterly unaccountable and absurd on any hypothesis which denies the sacrifice of Christ; for what relation could his death have to the Levitical immolations and offerings, if it had no sacrificial character? Nothing could, in fact, be more misleading, and even absurd, than to apply those

terms, which, both among Jews and Gentiles, were in use to express the various processes and means of atonement and piacular propitiation, if the apostles and Christ himself did not intend to represent his death strictly as an expiation for sin:- misleading, because such would be the natural and necessary inference from the terms themselves, which had acquired this as their established meaning; and absurd, because if, as Socinians say, they used them metaphorically, there was not even an ideal

resemblance between the figure, and that which it was intended to illustrate. So totally irrelevant, indeed, will those terms appear to any notion entertained of the death of Christ which excludes its expiatory character, that to assume that our Lord and his apostles used them as metaphors, is profanely to assume them to be such writers as would not in any other case be tolerated; writers wholly unacquainted with the commonest rules of elocution, and therefore wholly unfit to be teachers

of others, not only in religion but in things of inferior importance.

The use of such terms, we have said, would not only be wholly absurd, but criminally misleading to the Gentiles, as well as to the Jews, who were first converted to Christianity. To them the notion of propitiatory offerings, offerings to avert the displeasure of the gods, and which expiated the crimes of offenders, was most familiar, and the corresponding terms in constant use.

The bold denial of this by Dr. Priestley might well bring upon him the reproof of Archbishop Magee who, after establishing this point from the Greek and Latin writers, observes, "So clearly does their language announce the notion of a propitiatory atonement, that if we would avoid an imputation on Dr. Priestley's fairness, we are driven, of necessity, to question the extent of his acquaintance with those writers." The reader may consult the instances given by this writer, in No. 5 of his Illustrations appended

to his Discourses on the Atonement; and particularly the tenth chapter of Grotius's De Satisfactione, whose learning has most amply illustrated and firmly settled this view of the heathen sacrifices. The use to be made of this in the argument is, that as the apostles found the very terms they used with reference to the nature and efficacy of the death of Christ, fixed in an expiatory signification among the Greeks, they could not, in honesty, use them in a distant figurative

sense, much less in a contrary one, without due notice of their having invested them with a new import being given to their readers. From hagos, a pollution, an impurity, which was to be expiated by sacrifice, are derived hagnizo and hagazo, which denote the act of expiation; katharizo, to purify, cleanse, is applied to the effect of expiation; and igazo denotes the method of propitiating the gods by sacrifice. These, and other words of similar import, are used by the authors of the Septuagint, and by the

evangelists and apostles; but they give no notice of using them in any strange and altered sense; and when they apply them to the death of Christ, they must, therefore, be understood to use them in their received meaning.

In like manner the Jews had their expiatory sacrifices, and the terms and phrases used in them are, in like manner, employed by the apostles to characterize the death of their Lord; and they would have been as guilty of misleading their Jewish as

their Gentile readers, had they employed them in a new sense, and without warning, which, unquestionably, they never gave.

The force of this has been felt, and as, in order to avoid it, the two points, the expiatory nature of the Jewish sacrifices and their typical signature have been questioned, it will be necessary to establish each.

As to the expiatory nature of the sacrifices of the law, it is not necessary to show that all the Levitical offerings were of this

character. There were also offerings for persons and for things prescribed for purification, which were incidental; but even they grew out of the leading notion of expiatory sacrifice, and that legal purification which resulted from the forgiveness of sins. It is enough to show that the grand and eminent sacrifices of the Jews were strictly expiatory, and that by them the offerers were released from punishment and death, for which ends they were appointed by the Lawgiver.

When we speak, too, of vicarious sacrifice, we do not mean, either on the one hand, such a substitution as that the victim should bear the same quantum of pain and suffering as the offender himself; or, on the other, that it was put in the place of the offender as a mere symbolical act, by which he confessed his desert of punishment; but a substitution made by Divine appointment, by which the victim was exposed to sufferings and death instead of the offender, in virtue of which the offender himself should

be released. In this view one can scarcely conceive why so able a writer as Archbishop Magee should prefer to use the term

"vicarious import," rather than the simple and established term "vicarious;" since the Antinomian notion of substitution may be otherwise sufficiently guarded against, and the phrase "vicarious import" is certainly capable of being resolved into that figurative notion of mere symbolical action, which, however plausible, does, in

fact, deprive the ancient sacrifices of their typical, and the oblation of Christ of its real efficacy. Vicarious acting, is acting for another; vicarious suffering, is suffering for another; but the nature and circumstances of that suffering in the case of Christ, is to be determined by the doctrine of Scripture at large, and not wholly by the term itself, which is, however, useful for this purpose, (and therefore to be preserved,) that it indicates the sense in which those who use it understand the declaration

of Scripture, that Christ "died for us," to be that he died not merely for our benefit, but in our stead; in other words, that but for his having died, those who believe in him would personally have suffered that death which is the penalty of every violation of the law of God.

That sacrifices under the law were expiatory and vicarious admits of abundant proof.

The chief objections made to this doctrine, are, first, that under the law, in all capital cases, the offender,

upon legal proof or conviction, was doomed to die, and that no sacrifice could exempt him from the penalty. Secondly, that in all lower cases to which the law had not attached capital punishment, but pecuniary mulcts, or personal labor or servitude, upon their non-payment, this penalty was to be strictly executed, and none could plead any privilege or exemption on account of sacrifice; and that when sacrifices were ordained with a pecuniary mulct, they are to be regarded in the light of fine, one part of

which was paid to the state, the other to the Church. This was the mode of argument adopted by the author of "the Moral Philosopher," and nothing of weight has been added to these objections since.

Now much of this may be granted, without any prejudice to the argument; and, indeed, is no more than the most orthodox writers on this subject have often adverted to. The law, under which the Jews were placed, was at once, as to them, both a moral and a political law; and the

Lawgiver excepted certain offences from the benefit of a pardon, which implied exemption from temporal death, which was the state penalty, and therefore would accept no atonement for such transgressions. Blasphemy, idolatry, murder, and adultery, were those "presumptuous sins"

which were thus exempted, and the reason will be seen in the political relation of the people to God. In refusing this exemption from punishment in this world, in certain cases, respect was had to the

order and benefit of society. Running parallel, however, with this political application of the law to the Jews as subjects of the theocracy, we see the authority of the moral law kept over them as men and creatures; and if these "presumptuous sins," of blasphemy and idolatry, of murder and adultery, and a few others, were the only capital crimes, considered politically, they were not the only capital crimes, considered morally, that is, there were other crimes which would have subjected the offender to

death, but for this provision of expiatory oblations. The true question then is, whether such sacrifices were appointed by God, and accepted instead of the personal punishment or life of the offender, which otherwise would have been forfeited, as in the other cases; and if so, if the life of animal sacrifices was accepted instead of the life of man, then the notion that they were mere mulcts and pecuniary penalties falls to the ground, and the vicarious nature of most of

the Levitical oblations is established.

That other offences, beside those above mentioned, were capital, that is, exposed the offender to death, is clear from this, that all offences against the law had this capital character. As death was the sanction of the commandment given to Adam, so every one who transgressed any part of the law of Moses became guilty of death; every man was accursed, that is, devoted to die, who

"continued not in all things written in the book of the law;" "the man only that doeth these things shall live by them," was the rule; and it was, therefore, to redeem the offenders from this penalty that sacrifices were appointed. So, with reference to the great day of expiation, we read, "For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that you may be clean from all your sins; and this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel for

all their sins, once a year," Lev. 16:30-34.

To prove that this was the intention and effect of the annual sacrifices of the Jews, we need do little more than refer to Leviticus 17:10, 11, "I will set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people. For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your SOULS: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul."

Here the blood which is said to make atonement for the soul, is the blood of the victims, and to make an atonement for the soul, is the same as to be a ransom for the soul, as will appear by referring to Exodus 30:12-16, and to be a ransom for the soul, is to avert death. "They shall give every man a ransom for his soul unto the Lord, that there be no plague among them," by which their lives might be suddenly taken away. The "soul" is also here used obviously for the life; the blood, or the life, of the

victims in all the sacrifices, was substituted for the life of man, to preserve him from death, and the victims were therefore vicarious. (Vide Outram de Sacrif. lib. 1, c. xxii.)

The Hebrew word rendered atonement, kaphar, signifying primarily to cover, overspread, has been the subject of some evasive criticisms. It comes, however, in the secondary sense to signify atonement, or propitiation, because the effect of that is to cover, or, in Scripture meaning, to obtain the forgiveness of

offences. The Septuagint, also, renders it by exilasasqai, to appease, to make propitious. It is used, indeed, where the means of atonement are not of the sacrificial kind, but these "instances equally serve to evince the Scripture sense of the term, in cases of transgression, to be that of reconciling the offended Deity, by averting his displeasure; so that when the atonement for sin is said to be made by sacrifice, no doubt can remain, that the sacrifice was strictly a sacrifice of propitiation. Agreeably to

this conclusion we find it expressly declared, in the several cases of piacular oblations for transgression of the Divine commands, that the sin for which atonement was made by those oblations, should be forgiven" (Magee's Discourses, vol. i, page 332.)

As the notion that the sacrifices of the law were not vicarious, but mere mulcts and fines, is overturned by the general appointment of the blood to be an atonement for the souls, the forfeited lives of

men, so also is it contradicted by particular instances. Let us refer to Lev. 5:15, 16, "If a soul commit a trespass, and sin through ignorance, in the holy things of the Lord, he shall make amends for the harm that he hath done in the holy thing, and shall add a fifth part thereto, and shall give it to the priest." Here, indeed, is the proper "fine" for the trespass: but it is added, "he shall bring for his trespass unto the Lord, a ram without blemish, and the priest shall make atonement for him, with the ram of the

trespass offering, and it shall be forgiven him."

Thus, then, so far from the sacrifice being the fine, the fine is distinguished from it, and with the ram only was the atonement made to the Lord for his trespass. Nor can the ceremonies, with which the trespass and sin offerings were accompanied, agree with any notion but that of their vicarious character. The worshipper, conscious of his trespass, brought an animal, his own property, to the door of the tabernacle. This was not an

eucharistical act, not a memorial of mercies received, but of sins committed. He laid, his hands upon the head of the animal, the symbolical act of transfer of punishment, then slew it with his own hand, and delivered it to the priest, who burnt the fat and part of the animal upon the altar, and having sprinkled part of the blood upon the altar, and, in some cases, upon the offerer himself, poured the rest at the bottom of the altar. And thus, we are told, "the priest shall make an atonement for him, as

concerning his sin, and it shall be forgiven him." So clearly is it made manifest by these actions, and by the description of their nature and end, that the animal bore the punishment of the offender, and that by this appointment he was reconciled to God, and obtained the forgiveness of his offences.

An equally strong proof, that the life of the animal sacrifice was accepted in place of the life of man, is afforded by the fact, that atonement was required by the law to be made, by sin

offerings and burnt offerings, for even bodily distempers and disorders. It is not necessary to the argument to explain the distinctions between these various oblations, (2) nor yet to inquire into the reason which required propitiation to be made for corporal infirmities, which, in many cases, could not be avoided. They were, however, thus connected with sin as the cause of all these disorders, and God, who had placed his residence among the Israelites, insisted upon a perfect ceremonial purity,

to impress upon them a sense of his moral purity, and the necessity of purification of mind. Whether these were the reasons, or whatever other reason there might be in the case, and whether it is at all discoverable by us, all such unclean persons were liable to death, and were exempted from it only by animal sacrifices. This appears from the conclusion to all the Levitical directions concerning the ceremonial to be followed in all such cases. Lev. 15:31, "Thus shall ye separate the

children of Israel from their uncleanness; that they die not in (or by) their uncleanness, when they defile my tabernacle which is among them." So that by virtue of the sin offerings, the children of Israel were saved from a death, which otherwise they would have suffered for their uncleanness, and that by substituting the life of the animal for the life of the offerer. Nor can it be urged, that death is, in these instances, threatened only as a punishment of not observing these laws of purification, for the reason

given in the passage just quoted, for the threatening of death is not hypothetical upon their not bringing the prescribed atonement, but is grounded upon the fact of "defiling the tabernacle of the Lord, which was among them," which is supposed to be done by all uncleanness as such, in the first instance.

(2) On this subject, see Outram De Sacrificiis.

As a farther proof of the vicarious character of the principal sacrifices of the Mosaic economy, we may instance those statedly

offered for the whole congregation. Every day were offered two lambs, one in the morning, and the other in the evening, "for a continual burnt offering." To these daily victims were to be added, weekly, two other lambs for the burnt offering of every Sabbath. None of these could be considered in the light of fines for offences, since they were offered for no particular persons, and must be considered, therefore, unless resolved into an unmeaning ceremony, piacular and vicarious. To pass over,

however, the monthly sacrifices, and those offered at the great feasts, it is sufficient to fix upon those which are so often alluded to in the Epistle to the Hebrews, offered on the solemn anniversary of expiation. On that day, to other prescribed sacrifices, were to be added another ram for a burnt offering, and another goat, the most eminent of all the sacrifices, for a sin offering, whose blood was to be carried by the high priest into the inner sanctuary, which was not done by the blood of any other victim,

except the bullock, which was offered the same day as a sin offering for the family of Aaron. "The circumstances of this ceremony, whereby atonement was to be made 'for all the sins' of the whole Jewish people, are so strikingly significant that they deserve a particular detail. On the day appointed for this general expiation, the priest is commanded to offer a bullock and a goat, as sin offerings, the one for himself, and the other for the people, and having sprinkled the blood of

these, in due form, before the mercy seat, to lead forth a second goat, denominated the scape goat; and after laying both his hands upon the head of the scape goat, and confessing over him all the iniquities of the people, to put them upon the head of the goat, and to send the animal, thus bearing the sins of the people, away into the wilderness; in this manner expressing, by an action which cannot be misunderstood, that the atonement, which it is affirmed was to be effected by the sacrifice of the sin

offering, consisted in removing from the people their iniquities by this translation of them to the animal. For it is to be remarked, that the ceremony of the scapegoat is not a distinct one; it is a continuation of the process, and is evidently the concluding part, and symbolical consummation of the sin offering. So that the transfer of the iniquities of the people upon the head of the scape goat, and the bearing them away into the wilderness, manifestly imply, that the atonement effected by the

sacrifice of the sin offering consisted in the transfer, and consequent removal of those iniquities." (Magee's Discourses.) How, then, is this impressive and singular ceremonial to be explained? Shall we resort to the notion of mulcts and fines? but if so, then this and other stated sacrifices must be considered in the light of penal enactments. But this cannot agree with the appointment of such sacrifices annually in succeeding generations - "this shall be a statute for ever unto you." The law appoints a certain day in

the year for expiating the sins both of the high priest himself and of the whole congregation, and that for all high priests, and all generations of the congregation. Now, could a law be enacted, inflicting a certain penalty, at a certain time, upon a whole people, as well as upon their high priest, thus presuming upon their actual transgression of it? The sacrifice was also for sins in general, and yet the penalty, if it were one, is not greater than individual persons were often obliged to undergo for single

trespasses. Nothing, certainly, can be more absurd than this hypothesis. (Vide Chapman's Eusebius.)

Shall we account for it by saying, that sacrifices were offered for the benefit of the worshipper, but exclude the notion of expiation? But here we are obliged to confine the benefit to reconciliation and the taking away of sins, and that by the appointed means of the shedding of blood, and the presentation of blood in the holy place, accompanied by the

expressive ceremony of imposition of hands upon the head of the victim, the import of which act is fixed beyond all controversy, by the priest's confessing, at the same time, over that victim, the sins of all the people, and imprecating upon its head the vengeance due to them, Lev. 16:21.

Shall we content ourselves with merely saying that this was a symbol; but the question remains of what was it the symbol? To determine that, let the several parts of the

symbolic action be enumerated. Here is confession of sin-confession before God, at the door of his tabernacle-the substitution of a victim-the figurative transfer of sins to that victim-the shedding of blood, which God appointed to make atonement for the soul-the carrying the blood into the holiest place, the very per. mission of which clearly marked the Divine acceptance-the bearing away of iniquity-and the actual reconciliation of the people to God. If, then, this is symbolical, it has

nothing correspondent with it; it never had or can have any thing correspondent to it but the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ, and the communication of the benefits of his passion in the forgiveness of sins to those that believe in him, and their reconciliation with God.

Shall we, finally, say, that those sacrifices had respect not to God to obtain pardon by expiation; but to the offerer, teaching him moral lessons, and calling forth moral dispositions?

We answer, that this hypothesis leaves many of the essential circumstances of the ceremonial wholly unaccounted for. The tabernacle and temple were erected for the residence of God, by his own command. There it was his will to be approached, and to these sacred places the victims were required to be brought. Anywhere else they might as well have been offered, if they had had respect only to the offerer; but they were required to be brought to God, to be offered according to a prescribed

ritual, and by an order of men appointed for that purpose. "But there is no other reason why they should be offered in the sanctuary, than this, that they were offered to the inhabitant of the sanctuary; nor could they be offered to him without having respect to him, or without his being the object of their efficacy, as in the case of solemn prayers addressed to him.

There were some victims whose blood, on the day of atonement, was to be carried into the inner

sanctuary; but for what purpose can we suppose the blood to have been carried into the most sacred part of the Divine residence, and that on the day of atonement, except to obtain the favor of him in whose presence it was sprinkled?" (Outram DeSacrificiis.) To this we may add, that the reason given for these sacred services is not in any case a mere moral effect to be produced upon the minds of the worshippers; they were to make atonement, that is, to avert God's

displeasure, that the people might not "die."

We may find also another most explicit illustration in the sacrifice of the Passover. The sacrificial character of this offering is strongly marked; for it was, corban, an offering brought to the tabernacle; it was slain in the sanctuary, and the blood sprinkled upon the altar by the priests.

It derives its name from the passing over, and sparing the houses of the Israelites, on the door posts of which the blood of the immolated lamb was sprinkled, when

the first born in the houses of the Egyptians were slain; and thus we have another instance of life being spared by the instituted means of animal sacrifice. Nor need we confine ourselves to particular instances -

"almost all things," says an authority, who surely knew his subject, "are by the law purged with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission;"

By their very law and by constant usage, then, were the Jews familiarized to the notion of expiatory

sacrifice, as well as by the history contained in their sacred books, especially in Genesis, which speaks of the vicarious sacrifices offered by the patriarchs, and the book of Job, in which that patriarch is recorded to have offered sacrifices for the supposed sins of his sons, and Eliphaz is commanded by a Divine oracle, to offer a burnt offering for himself and his friends, "lest GOD should deal with them after their folly."

On the sentiments of the uninspired Jewish writers

on this point, the substitution of the life of the animal for that of the offerer, and, consequently, the expiatory nature of their sacrifices, Outram has given many quotations from their writings, which the reader may consult in his work on Sacrifices. Two or three only need be adduced by way of specimen. R. Levi Ben Gerson says,

"the imposition of the hands of the offerers was designed to indicate, that their sins were removed from themselves, and

transferred to the animal." Isaac Ben Arama - "he transfers his sins from himself, and lays them upon the head of his victim." R. Moses Ben Nachman says, with respect to a sinner offering a victim, "It was just that, his blood should be shed, and that his body should be burned; but the Creator, of his mercy, accepted this victim from him, as his substitute and ransom; that the blood of the animal might be shed instead of his blood; that is, that the blood of the

animal might be given for his life."

Full of these ideas of vicarious expiation, then, the apostles wrote and spoke, and the Jews of their time and in subsequent ages heard and read the boob of the New Testament. The Socinian pretence is, that the inspired penmen used the sacrificial terms which occur in their writings figuratively, but we not only reply, as before, that they could not do this honestly, unless they had given notice of this new

application of the established terms of the Jewish theology; but that if this be assumed, their writings leave us wholly at a loss to discover what it really was which they intended to teach by these sacrificial terms and allusions. They are, themselves, utterly silent as to this, and the varying theories of those who reject the doctrine of atonement, in fact, confess that their writings afford no solution of the difficulty. If, therefore, it is blasphemous to suppose, on the one hand, that

inspired men should write on purpose to mislead; so, on the other, is it utterly inconceivable that, had they only been ordinary writers, they should construct a figurative language out of terms which had a definite and established sense, without giving any intimation at all that they employed them otherwise than in their received meaning, or telling us why they adopted them at all, and more especially when they knew that they must be interpreted, both by Jews and Greeks, in a sense

which, if the Socinians are right, was in direct opposition to that which they intended to convey.

This will, however, appear with additional evidence, when the typical, as well as the expiatory character of the legal sacrifices are considered. In strict argument, the latter does not depend upon the former, and if the oblations of the Mosaic institute had not been intentionally adumbrative of the one oblation of Christ, the argument, from their vicarious and expiatory

character, would still have been valid. For if the legal sacrifices were offered in place of the offender, blood for blood, life for life, and if the death of Christ is represented to be, in as true a sense, a sacrifice and expiation, then is the doctrine of the New Testament writers, as to the expiatory character of the death of our Lord, explicitly established.

That the Levitical sacrifices were also TYPES, is another argument, and accumulates the already preponderating evidence.

A type, in the theological sense, is defined by systematic writers to be a sign or example, prepared and designed by God to prefigure some future thing. It is required that it should represent (though the degree of clearness may be very different in different instances) this future object, either by something which it has in common with it, or in being the symbol of some property which it possesses;- that it should be prepared and designed by God thus to represent its antitype, which

circumstance distinguishes it from a simile, and from hieroglyphic;- that it should give place to the antitype so soon as the latter appears; and that the efficacy of the antitype should exist in the type in appearance only, or in a lower degree. (Vide Outram De Sacrifoiis.) These may be considered as the general properties of a type.

Of this kind are the views given us, in the sacred Scriptures of the New Testament, of the Levitical dispensation, and of many

events and examples of the Mosaic history. Thus St. Paul calls the meats and drinks, the holy days, new moons, and Sabbaths of the Jews, including in them the services performed in the celebration of these festivals, "a shadow of things to come;"

"the body" of which shadow, whose form the shadow generally and faintly exhibited, "is Christ."

Again, when speaking of the things which happened to the Israelites, in the wilder-ness, he calls them

"ensamples" (tupoi) types, "written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." In Hebrews 10:1, the same apostle, when he discourses expressly on the "sacrifices"

of the tabernacle, calls them "the shadow of good things to come," and places them in contrast with "the very image of the things," that is, the "good things" just before mentioned; and, in the preceding chapter, he tells us that the services performed in the tabernacle prefigured what

was afterward to be transacted in the heavenly sanctuary. These instances are sufficient for the argument, and, in examining them, we may observe, that if the things here alluded to are not allowed to be types, then they are used as mere illustrative rhetorical illustrations, and in their original institution had no more reference to the facts and doc. trines of the Christian system than the sacrificial services of pagan tern-pies, which might, in some particulars, upon this hypothesis, just as well

have served the apostle's purpose. But if, upon examination, this notion of their being used merely as rhetorical illustrations be contradicted by the passages themselves, then the true typical character of these events and ceremonies may be considered as fairly established.

With respect to the declaration of St. Paul, that the punishments inflicted upon the disobedient and unfaithful Israelites in the wilderness were "types written for our

admonition," it is only to be explained by considering the history of that people as designedly, and, by appointment, typical. These things happened for types; and that, by types, the apostle means much more than a general admonitory correspondence between disobedience and punishment, which many other circumstances might just as well have afforded; he adds, that "they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come," that is, for the admonition of

Christians who had entered into the obligations of the new dispensation. For this purpose they were recorded; by this act of God they were made types in the highest sense; and could not become types in the sense of mere figurative illustration, which would, have been contingent upon this rhetorical use being made of them by some subsequent writer. This is farther confirmed also by the pre-ceding verses, in which the apostle calls the manna "spiritual meat,"

which can only be understood of it as being a type of the bread which came down from heaven, even Christ, who, in allusion to the same fact, so designates himself. The "rock," too, is called the spiritual rock, and that rock, adds the apostle, "was Christ," but in what conceivable meaning, except as it was an appointed type of him?

This is St. Paul's general description of the typical character of "the Church in the wilderness." In the other passages quoted, he

adduces, in particular, the Levitical services. He calls the ceremonial of the law "a shadow," (skia;) in the Epistle to the Colossians, he opposes this shadow to "the body;" in that to the Hebrews, to "the very image;" by which he obviously means the reality of "the good things" adumbrated, or their essential form or substance Now whether we take the word am for the shadow of the body of man; or for a faint delineation, or sketch, to be succeeded by a finished picture, it is clear, that whatever the law was,

it was by Divine appointment; and as there is a relation between the shadow and the body which produces it, and the sketch or outline and the finished picture, so if, by Divine appointment, the law was this shadow of good things to come, which is what the apostle asserts, then there was an intended relation of one to the other, quite independent of the figurative and rhetorical use which might be made of a mere accidental comparison. If the apostle speaks figuratively only, then the law is to be

supposed to have no appointed relation to the Gospel, as a shadow or sketch of good things to come, and this relation is one of imagination only; if the relation was a designed and an appointed one, then the resolution of the apostle's words into figurative allusion cannot be maintained. But, farther, the apostle grounds an argument upon these types; an argument, too, of the most serious kind; an argument for renouncing the law and embracing the Gospel, upon the penalty of eternal

danger to the soul: no absurdity can, therefore, be greater than to suppose him to argue so weighty and important a question upon a relation of one thing to another existing only in the imagination, and not appointed by God; and if the relation was so appointed, it is of that instituted and adumbrative kind which constitutes a type in its special and theological sense.

Of this appointment and designation of the tabernacle service to be a shadow of good things to

come, the ninth chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews affords several direct and unequivocal declarations. So verse seven and eight, "But into the second went the high priest alone, once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people; the Holy Ghost signifying this (showing, declaring by this type) that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest." Here we have the declaration of a doctrine by type, which is surely very different to the figurative use of a fact,

employed to embellish and enforce an argument by a subsequent writer, and this is also referred to the design and intention of the "Holy Ghost"

himself, at the time when the Levitical ritual was prescribed, and this typical declaration was to continue until the new dispensation should be introduced. In verse nine, the tabernacle itself is called a figure or parable: "Which was a figure (parabolee) for the time then present." It: was a parable by which the evangelical and spiritual

doctrines were taught; it was an appointed parable, because limited to a certain time, "for the time then present" that is, until the bringing in of the things signified, to which it had this designed relation. Again, verse 23, "the things under the law" are called "patterns (representations) of things in the heavens;" and in verse 24, the holy places made with hands are denominated "the figures," (antitypes) "of the true." Were they then representations and antitypes only in St. Paul's

imagination, or in reality and. by appointment?

Read his argument: "It was necessary, that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves, with better sacrifices than these." On the hypothesis that sacrificial terms and allusions are employed figuratively only by the apostle, what kind of argument, we may ask, is this? On what does the common necessity of the purification, both of the earthly and the heavenly

tabernacle, by sacrifices, though different in their degree of value and efficacy, rest? Could the apostle say that this was necessary, to afford him a figurative embellishment in writing his epistle? The necessity is clearly grounded upon the relation instituted by the Author of the Levitical economy himself; the heavenly places were not to be entered by sinners, but through the blood of "better sacrifices;" and to teach this doctrine early to mankind, it was "necessary" to purify the

earthly tabernacle, and thus give the people access to it only by the blood of the inferior sacrifices, that both they and the tabernacle might be the types of evangelical and heavenly things, and that they might be taught the only means of obtaining access to the tabernacle in.heaven. There was, therefore, in setting up these "patterns,"

an intentioned adumbration of these future things, and hence the word used is (hupodeígmati) the import

of which is shown in chapter 8:5, where it is associated with the term, the shadow of heavenly things, - "who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things," or "these" priests "perform the service with a representation and shadow of the heavenly things."

The sacrificial ceremonies, then, of the Levitical institute, are clearly established to be typical, and have all the characters which constitute a type in the received theological sense. They are

represented by St. Paul, in the passages which have been under consideration, as adumbrative; as designed and appointed to be so by God; as having respect to things future, to Christ and to his sacerdotal ministry; as being inferior in efficacy to the antitypes which correspond to them, the

"better sacrifices," of which he speaks; and they were all displaced by the antitype, the Levitical ceremony being repealed by the death and ascension of our Lord.

Since, then, both the expiatory and the typical characters of the Jewish sacrifices were so clearly held by the writers of the New Testament, there can be no rational doubt as to the sense in which they apply sacrificial terms and allusions, to describe the nature and effect of the death of Christ.

As the offering of the animal sacrifice took away sin, that is, obtained remission for offences against the law, we can be at no loss to know what the Baptist means, when,

pointing to Christ, he exclaims, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." As there was a transfer of suffering and death, from the offender to the legally clean and sound victim, so Christ died, "the just for the unjust;" as the animal sacrifice was expiating, so Christ is our (hilasmos,) propitiation, or expiation; as by the Levitical oblations men were reconciled to God, so "we, when enemies, were reconciled to God by the death of his Son;" as under the law, "without shedding

of blood there was no remission," so, as to Christ, we are "justified by his blood," and have "redemption through his blood, the remission of sins;" as by the blood of the appointed sacrifices, the holy places, made with hands, were made accessible to the Jewish worshippers, that blood, being carried into them, and sprinkled by the high priest, so "Christ entered once, with his own blood into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us," and has thus opened for us a

"new and living way" into the celestial sanctuary; as the blood of the Mosaic oblations was the blood of the Old Testament, so, he himself says, "this is my blood of the New Testament, shed for the remission of sins;" as it was a part of the sacrificial solemnity, in some instances, to feast upon the victim; so, with direct reference to this, our Lord also declares that he would give his own "flesh for the life of the world;" and that "whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life; for my flesh is

meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed;"

that is, it is in truth and reality what the flesh and blood of the Jewish victims were in type, The instances of this use of sacrificial terms are, indeed, almost innumerable, and enough, I trust, has been said to show that they could not be employed in a merely figurative sense; nevertheless there are two or three passages in which they occur as the basis of an argument which depends upon taking them in the received sense, with

a brief consideration of which we may conclude this part of the subject.

When St. Paul, in writing to the Corinthians, says, "for he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin," or "him who knew no sin, he hath made to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him," he concludes a discourse upon our reconciliation to God, and lays this down as the general principle upon which that reconciliation, of which he has been speaking, is to be explained

and enforced, Here, then, the question is, in what sense Christ was made sin for us. Not, certainly, as to the guilt of it; for it is expressly said, that "he knew no sin;" but as to the expiation of it, by his personal sufferings, by which he delivers the guilty from punishment.

For the phrase is manifestly taken from the sin offerings of the Old Testament which are there sometimes called "sins" as being offerings for sin, and because the animals sacrificed represented the

sinners themselves. Thus, Lev. 4:21, the heifer to be offered, is called, in our translation, more agreeably to our idiom, "a sin offering for the congregation;" but, in the LXX, it is denominated "the sin of the congregation." So, also, in verse 29, as to the red heifer which was to be offered for the sin of private persons, the person offending was "to lay his hand upon the head of the sin offering" as we rightly interpret it; but, in the LXX, "upon the head of his sin," agreeably to the Hebrew word, which

signifies indifferently either sin or the offering for it.

Thus, again, in Lev. 6:25, "This is the law of the sin offering" in the Greek, "This is the law of sin;" which also has, "they shall slay the sins before the Lord," for the sin offerings. The Greek of the Apostle Paul is thus easily explained by that of the LXX, and affords a natural exposition of the passage - "Him who knew no sin, God hath made sin for us," as the sin offerings of the law were made sins for

offenders, the death of innocent creatures exempting from death those who were really criminal. (Vide chapman's eusebius, chap, iv.) This allusion to the Levitical sin offerings is also established by the connection of Christ's sin offering with our reconciliation.

Such was the effect of the sin offerings among the Jews, and such, St. Paul tells us, is the effect of Christ being made a sin offering for us; a sufficient proof that he does not use the term figuratively, nor

speak of the indirect but of the direct effect of the death of Christ in reconciling us to God.

Again, in Ephes. 5:2, "Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God, for a sweet-smelling savor." Here, also, he uses the very terms applied to the Jewish sacrifices.

How, then, could a Jew, or even a Gentile, understand him? Would an inspired man use sacrificial language without a sacrificial sense, and merely amuse his readers

with the sound of words without meaning, or employ them without notice being given, in a meaning which the readers were not accustomed to affix to them? The argument forbids this, as well as the reason and honesty of the case. His object was to impress the Ephesians with the deepest sense of the love of Christ; and he says, "Christ loved us; and gave up himself for us;" and then explains the mode in which he thus gave himself up for us, that is, in our room and stead, "an offering and sacrifice to

God, for a sweet-smelling savor;" by which his readers could only understand, that Christ gave himself up a sacrifice for them, as other sacrifices had been given up for them, "in the way of expiation, to obtain for them the mercy and favor of God." The cavil of Crellius and his followers on this passage is easily answered. He says, that the phrase "a sweet-smelling savor," is scarcely ever used of sin offerings or expiatory sacrifices; but of burnt offerings, and peace offerings, by which

expiation was not made. But here are two mistakes. The first lies in assuming that Burnt offerings were not expiatory, whereas they are said, "to make atonement,"

and were so considered by the Jews, though sometimes also they were eucharistic. The second mistake is, that the phrase, "a sweet-smelling savor," is by some peculiar fitness applied to one class of offerings alone. It is a gross conception, that it relates principally to the odor of sacrifices burned with fire;

whereas it signifies the acceptableness of sacrifices to God; and is so explained in Phil. 4:18, where the apostle calls the bounty of the Philippians, "an odor of sweet smell" and adds, exegetically, "a sacrifice acceptable and well pleasing to God." The phrase is, probably, taken from the incensing which accompanied the sacrificial services.

To these instances must be added the whole argument of St. Paul, in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

To what purpose does he prove that Christ had a superior priesthood to Aaron, if Christ were only metaphorically a priest? What end is answered by proving that his offering of himself had greater efficacy than the oblations of the tabernacle, in taking away sin, if sin was not taken away in the same sense, that is, by expiation? Why does he lay so mighty a stress upon the death of our Lord, as being "a better sacrifice," if, according to the received sense, it was no sacrifice at all? His argument, it is manifest,

would go for nothing, and be no better than an unworthy trifling with his readers, and especially with the Hebrews to whom he writes the epistle, beneath not only an inspired but an ordinary writer. Fully to unfold the argument, we might travel through the greater part of the epistle; but one or two passages may suffice. In chap. 7:27, speaking of Christ as our high priest, he says, "Who needeth not daily as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for the people's, for this (latter) he

did once when he offered up himself." The circumstance of his offering sacrifice not daily, but "once for all," marks the superior value and efficacy of his sacrifice; his offering up this sacrifice "of himself"

for the sins of the people, as the Jewish high priest offered his animal sacrifices for the sins of the people, marks the similarity of the act; in both cases atonement was made, but with different degrees of efficacy; but unless atonement for sin

was in reality made by his thus offering up

"himself," the virtue and efficacy of Christ's sacrifice would be inferior to that of the Aaronical priesthood, contrary to the declared design and argument of the epistle. Let us, also, refer to chap. 9:13, 14, "For if the blood of hulls and of goats, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh," so as to fit the offender for joining in the service of the tabernacle, "how much more shall the blood of Christ, who

through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your consciences from dead works, to serve the living God." The comparison here lies in this, that the Levitical sacrifices expiated legal punishments; but did not in themselves acquit the people absolutely in respect to God, as the Governor and Judge of mankind; but that the blood of Christ extends its virtue to the conscience, and eases it of all guilty terror of the wrath to come on account of "dead works," or works which

deserve death under the universal, moral law. The ground of this comparison, however, lies in the real efficacy of each of these expiations. Each "purifies," each delivers from guilt, but the latter only as "pertaining to the conscience," and the mode in each case is by expiation, But to interpret the purging of the conscience, as the Socinians, of mere dissuasion from dead works to come, or as descriptive of the power of Christ to acquit men, upon their repentance, declaratively destroys all

just similitude between the blood of Christ and that of the animal sacrifices, and the argument amounts to nothing.

We conclude with a passage, to which we have before adverted, which institutes a comparison between the Levitical purification of the holy places made with hands, and the purification of the heavenly places by the blood of Christ. "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood, and without shedding of blood is no remission. It was

therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us," To enter into the meaning of this passage, we are to consider that God dwelt personally among the Israelites; that the sanctuary and tabernacle are represented as polluted by their sins,

and even corporal impurities, the penalty of which was death, unless atoned for, or expiated according to law, and that all unclean persons were debarred access to the tabernacle and the service of God, until expiation was made, and purification thereby effected. It was under these views that the sin offerings were made on the day of expiation, to which the apostle alludes in the above passage.

Then the high priest entered into the holy of holies, with the blood of

sacrifices, to make atonement both for himself and the whole people. He first offered for himself and for his house a bullock, and sprinkled the blood of it upon and before the mercy seat within the veil. Afterward he killed a goat for a sin offering for the people and sprinkled the blood in like manner. This was called atoning for, or hallowing and reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, "because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their

transgressions in all their sins." The effect of all this was the remission of sins, which is represented by the scapegoat, who carried away the sins which had been confessed over him, with imposition of hands; and the purification of the priests and people, so that their holy places were made accessible to them, and they were allowed, without fear of the death which had been threatened, to "draw near" to God.

We have already shown that here the holy places

made with hands, and the "true holy places," of which they were the figures, were purified and opened, each in the same way, by the sprinkling of the blood of the victims-the patterns or emblems of things in the heavens, by the blood of animals, the heavenly places themselves by "better sacrifices," and that the argument of the apostle forbids us to suppose that he is speaking figuratively. Let us, then, merely mark the correspondence of the type and antitype in this case, as exhibited by the apostle. He compares the

legal sacrifices and that of Christ in the similar purification of the respective Hagion or sanctuaries to which each had relation. The Jewish sanctuary on earth was purified, that is, opened and made accessible by the one; the celestial sanctuary, the true and everlasting seat of God's presence, by the other. Accordingly, in other passages, he pursues the parallel still farther, representing Christ as procuring for men, by his death, a happy admission into heaven, as the sin offerings of the law

obtained for the Jews a safe entrance into the tabernacle on earth. "Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having a high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." Thus, also, he tells us that "we are sanctified

by the offering of the body of Christ Jesus," and that as the bodies of those animals whose blood was carried into the holy of holies by the high priest, to make an atonement for sin, were burned "without the camp," so also Jesus suffered without the gate, "that he might sanctify the people with his own blood."

The notion that sacrificial terms are applied to the death of Christ by rhetorical figure is, then, sufficiently refuted by the foregoing considerations. But it has been argued, that

as there is, in many respects, a want of literal conformity between the death of Christ and the sacrifices of the law, a considerable license of figurative interpretation must be allowed. Great confusion of ideas on this subject has resulted from not observing a very obvious distinction which exists between figurative and analogical language, It by no means follows, that when language cannot be interpreted literally it must be taken figuratively, or by way of rhetorical allusion. This distinction is well

made by a late writer. (Veysies' Bampton Lectures.)

"Figurative language," he observes, "does not arise from the real nature of the thing to which it is transferred, but only from the imagination of him who transfers it. So, a man of courage is figuratively called a lion, not because the real nature of a lion belongs to him, but because one quality which characterizes this animal belongs to him in an eminent degree, and the imagination conceives of

them as partakers of a common nature, and applies to them one common name. But there is a species of language, usually called analogical, which, though not strictly proper, is far from being merely figurative, the terms being transferred from one thing to another, not because the things are similar) but because they are in similar relations. The term thus transferred, is as truly significant of the real nature of the thing, in the relation in which it stands, as it could be, were it the primitive and proper word.

Thus the term foot properly signifies the lower extremity of an animal, or that on which it stands; but, because the lower extremity or base of a mountain is to the mountain what the foot is to the animal, it is therefore called the same name, and the term thus applied is significant of something real, something which, if not afoot in strict propriety of speech, is, nevertheless truly so, considered with respect to the circumstance upon which the analogy is founded. But this mode of

expression is more common with respect to our mental and intellectual (acuities and operations, which we are wont to denominate by words borrowed from similar functions of the bodily organs and corresponding attributes of material things. Thus to see, is properly to acquire impressions of sensible objects by the organs of sight; but to the mind is also attributed an eye, with which we are analogically said to see objects intellectual In like manner, great and little, equal and

unequal, smooth and rough, sweet and sour, are properly attributes of material substances; but they are analogically ascribed to such as are immaterial; for without intending a figure, we speak of a great mind, and a little mind; and the natural temper of one man is said to be equal, smooth, and sweet, while that of another is called unequal, rough, and sour. And if we thus express such intellectual things as fall more immediately under our observation, we cannot wonder that things

spiritual and Divine, which are more removed from our direct inspection, should be exhibited to our apprehension in the same manner. The conceptions which we thus form, may be imperfect and inadequate; but they are, nevertheless, just and true, consequently the language in which they are expressed, although borrowed, is not merely figurative, but is significant of something real in the things concerned."

To apply this to the case before us, the blood or life

of Christ is called our ransom and the price of our redemption. Now, admitting that these expressions are not to be understood literally, does it follow that they contain mere figure and allusion? By no means. They contain truth and reality.

Christ came to redeem us from the power of sin and Satan, by paying for our deliverance no less a price than his own blood. "In him we have redemption through his blood." "The Son of man came to give his life a ransom for

many;" and we are taught, by this representation, that the blood of Christ, in the deliverance of sinful man, corresponds to a price or ransom in the deliverance of a captive, and consequently is a price or ransom, if not literally, at least really and truly.

When Christ is called "our passover," the same analogical use of terms is manifest, and in several other passages which will be familiar to the reader; but we hesitate to apply the same rule of interpretation throughout, and to say with

the author just quoted, and Archbishop Magee, who refers to him on this point with approbation, that Christ is called a "sin offering" and a "sacrifice"

analogically. These terms, on the contrary, are used properly, and must be understood literally. -

For what was an expiatory sacrifice under the law, but the offering of the life of an innocent creature in the place of the guilty, and that, in order to obtain his exemption from death? The death of Christ is as literally an offering of

himself "the just for the unjust," to exempt the latter from death. The legal sin offerings cleansed the body and qualified for the ceremonial worship prescribed by the law; and the blood of Christ as truly purifies the conscience and consecrates to the spiritual service required by the Gospel. The circumstances differ, but the things themselves are not so much analogical as identical in their nature, though differing in circumstances, that is, so far as the legal sacrifices had any efficacy, per se; but, in another and

a higher view, the sacrifice of Christ was the only true sacrifice, and the Levitical ones were but the appointed types of that. If, therefore, in this argument, we may refer to the Mosaic sacrifices, to fix the sense in which the New Testament uses the sacrificial terms in which it speaks of the death of Christ, against an objector; yet, in fact, the sacrifices of the law are to be interpreted by the sacrifice of Christ, and not the latter by them. - They are rather analogical with it, than it with them. There was a

previous ordination of pardon through the appointed sacrifice of the Lamb of God, "slain from the foundation of the world," to which they all, in different degrees, referred, and of which they were but the visible and sensible monitors "for the time present."

As to the objection, that the Jewish sacrifices had no reference to the expiation of moral transgression, we observe,

1. That a distinction is to be made between sacrifice as a part of the theo-political

law of the Jews, and sacrifice as a consuetudinary rite, practiced by their fathers, and by them also previous to the giving of the law from Mount Sinai, and taken up into the Mosaic institute. This was continued partly on its original ground, and partly, and with additions, as a branch of the polity under which the Jews were placed. With this rite they were familiar before the law, and even before the exodus from Egypt. "Let us go," says Moses to

Pharaoh, "we pray thee, three days'

journey into the desert, and sacrifice to the Lord our God, lest he fall upon m with pestilence or with the sword." Here sacrifice is spoken of, and that with reference to expiation, or the averting of the Divine displeasure. There is in this, too, au acknowledgment of offences, as the reason of sacrificing; but these offences could not be against the forms and ceremonies of an institute which did not then exist,

and must, therefore, have been moral offences. We may add to this, that in the books of Leviticus and Exodus, Moses speaks of sacrifices as a previous practice, and, in some cases, so far from prescribing the act, does no more than regulate the mode. "If his offering be a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male." Had their sacrifices, therefore, reference only to cases of ceremonial offence, then it would follow that they had been deprived of the worship of their ancestors, which respected the

obtaining of the Divine favor in the forgiveness of moral offences, and that they obtained, as a substitute, a kind of worship which respected only ceremonial cleansings, and a ceremonial reconciliation. They had this, manifestly, as the type of something higher; and they had also the patriarchal rites with renewed sanctions and under new regulations; and thus there was a real advance in the spirituality of their worship, while it became, at the same time, more ceremonial and exact,

2. That the offerings which were formerly prescribed under the law had reference to moral transgressions, as well as to external aberrations from the purity and exactness of the Levitical ritual,

"Atonement" is said to be made "for sins committed against any of the commandments of the Lord," It appears also, that sins of "ignorance" included all sins which were not ranked in the class of "presumptuous sins," or those to which death was inevitably

annexed by the civil law, and, therefore, must have included many cases of moral transgression. For some specific instances of this kind, sin offerings were enjoined, such as lying, theft, fraud, extortion, and perjury. (3)

(3) Vide Outram De Sac. Hallet's Notes and Discourses; Hammond and Rosenmuller in Heb. ix; Richie's Pec. Doctrine.

3. That if all the sin offerings of the Levitical institute had respected legal atonement and ceremonial purification,

nothing could have been collected from that circumstance to invalidate the true sacrifice of Christ. It is of the nature of a type to be inferior in efficacy to the antitype; and the Apostle Paul himself argues, from the invalidity of, Levitical sacrifices to take away guilt from the conscience, the superior efficacy of the sacrifice of Christ. It follows, then, that as truly as they were legal atonements, so truly was Christ's death a moral atonement; as truly as they purified the flesh, so truly

did his sacrifice purify the conscience.

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42 REDEMPTION - PRIMITIVE SACRIFICES

To the rite of sacrifice before the law, practiced in the patriarchal ages, up to the first family, it may be proper to give some consideration, both for the farther elucidation of some of the topics above stated, and for the purpose of exhibiting the harmony of those dispensations of

religion which were made to fallen man in different ages of the world. That the ante-Mosaic sacrifices were expiatory, is the first point which it is necessary to establish. It is not, indeed, at all essential to the argument, to ascend higher than the sacrifices of the law, which we have already proved to be of that character, and by which the expiatory efficacy of the death of Christ is represented in the New Testament. - This, however, was also the character of the more ancient rites of the

patriarchal Church; and thus we see the same principles of moral government, which distinguish the Christian and Mosaic dispensations, carried still higher as to antiquity, even to the family of the first man, the first transgressor; "without shedding of blood there was no remission."

The proofs that sacrifices of atonement made a part of the religious system of the patriarchs who lived before the law, are first the distribution of beasts into clean and unclean, which

we find prior to the flood of Noah. This is a singular distinction, and one which could not then have reference to food, since animal food was not allowed to man prior to the deluge; and as we know of no other ground for the distinction, except that of sacrifice, it must, therefore, have had reference to the selection of victims to be solemnly offered to God, as a part of worship, and as the means of drawing near to him by expiatory rites for the forgiveness of sins. Some, it is true, have regarded this distinction of

clean and unclean beasts as used by Moses by way of prolepsis, or anticipation, a notion which, if it could not be refuted by the context, would be perfectly arbitrary. But not only are the beasts, which Noah was to receive into the ark, spoken of as clean and unclean; but in the command to take them into the ark, a difference is made in the number to be preserved, the former being to be received by sevens, and the latter by two of a kind. This shows that this distinction among beasts had been

established in the time of Noah, and thus the assumption of a prolepsis is refuted. In the law of Moses a similar distinction is made; but the only reasons given for it are two: in this manner, those victims which God would allow to be used for piacular purposes, were marked out; and by this distinction those animals were designated which were permitted for food. The former only can, therefore, be considered as the ground of this distinction among the antediluvians; for the

critical attempts which have been made to show that animals were allowed to man for food, previous to the flood, have wholly failed.

A second argument is furnished by the prohibition of blood for food, after animals had been granted to man for his sustenance along with the "herb of the field," This prohibition is repeated by Moses to the Israelites, with this explanation, "I have given it upon the altar, to make an atonement for your souls."

From this "additional reason," as it has been called, it has been argued, that the doctrine of the atoning power of blood was new, and was then, for the first time, announced by Moses, or the same reason for the prohibition would have been given to Noah. To this we may reply, 1. That unless the same reason be supposed as the ground of the prohibition of blood to Noah, as that given by Moses to the Jews, no reason at all can be conceived for this restraint being put upon the appetite of mankind from Noah to

Moses; and yet we have a prohibition of a most solemn kind, which in itself could have no reason enjoined, without any external reason being either given or conceivable. 2. That it is a mistake to suppose, that the declaration of Moses to the Jews, that God had "given them the blood for an atonement," is an additional reason for the interdict, not to be found in the original prohibition to Noah. The whole passage in Lev. 17, is, "And thou shalt say to them, Whatsoever man there be

of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, that eateth any manner of blood, I will even set my face against that soul, that eateth blood, and I will cut him off from among his people, for the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it upon the altar, to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood (or life) that maketh atonement for the soul." The great reason, then, of the prohibition of blood is, that it is the LIFE; and what follows respecting atonement, is exegetical of this reason;

the life is in the blood, and the blood or life is given as an atonement.

Now, by turning to the original prohibition in Genesis, we find that precisely the same reason is given. "But the flesh with the blood, which is the life thereof, shall ye not eat." The reason, then, being the same, the question is, whether the exegesis added by Moses, must not necessarily be understood in the general reason given for the restraint to Noah. Blood is prohibited for this reason, that it is the life;

and Moses adds, that it is "the blood," or life "which makes atonement."

Let any one attempt to discover any reason for the prohibition of blood to Noah, in the mere circumstance that it is "the life," and he will find it impossible. It is no reason at all, moral or instituted, except that as it was life substituted for life, the life of the animal in sacrifice for the life of man, and that it had a sacred appropriation. The manner, too, in which Moses introduces the

subject, is indicative that, though he was renewing a prohibition, he was not publishing a

"new doctrine;" he does not teach his people that God had then given, or appointed, blood to make atonement; but he prohibits them from eating it, because he had made this appointment, without reference to time, and as a subject with which they were familiar. Because the blood was the life, it was sprinkled upon, and poured out at the altar: and we have in the sacrifice of

the paschal lamb, and the sprinkling of its blood, a sufficient proof, that before the giving of the law, not only was blood not eaten, but was appropriated to a sacred, sacrificial purpose. Nor was this confined to the Jews; it was customary with the Romans and Greeks, who, in like manner, poured out and sprinkled the blood of victims at their altars, a rite derived, probably, from the Egyptians, as they derived it, not from Moses, but from the sons of Noah. The notion, indeed, that the blood of the victims was

peculiarly sacred to the gods, is impressed upon all ancient pagan mythology.

Thirdly, the sacrifices of the patriarchs were those of animal victims, and their use was to avert the displeasure of God from sinning men. Thus in the case of Job, who, if it could be proved that he did not live before the law, was, at least, not under the law, and in whose country the true patriarchal theology was in force, the prescribed burnt offering was for the averting the "wrath"

of God, which was kindled against Eliphaz and his two friends, "lest," it is added, "I deal with you after your folly." The doctrine of expiation could not, therefore, be more explicitly declared.

The burnt offerings of Noah, also, after he left the ark, served to avert the "cursing of the ground any more for man's sake," that is, for man's sin, and the "smiting any more every thing living." In like manner, the end of Abel's offering was pardon and acceptance with God, and

by it these were attained, for "he obtained witness that he was righteous." But as this is the first sacrifice which we have on record, and has given rise to some controversy, it may be considered more largely: at present, however, the only question is its expiatory character.

As to the matter of the sacrifice, it was an animal offering. "Cain brought of the fruit of the ground, and Abel he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof;" or, more literally, "the fat of them,"

that is, according to the Hebrew idiom, the fattest or best of his flock.

Le Clerc and Grotius would understand Abel to have offered the wool and milk of his flock, which interpretation, if no critical difficulty opposed it, would be rendered violently improbable by the circumstance that neither wool nor milk is ever mentioned in Scripture as fit oblations to God. But to translate the word rendered firstlings, by best and finest, and then to suppose an ellipsis, and

supply it with wool, is wholly arbitrary, and contradicted by the import of the word itself. But, as Dr. Kennicott remarks, the matter is set at rest by the context; "for, if it be allowed by all, that Cain's bringing OF the fruit of the ground, means his bringing the fruit (itself) of the ground, then Abel's bringing of the firstlings of his flock must, likewise, mean his bringing the firstlings of his flock" (themselves.) (Two Dissertations. See also Magee's Discourses.) This is farther supported by the

import of the phrase (pleíona thusían) used by the apostle in the Epistle to the Hebrews, when speaking of the sacrifice of Abel. Our translators have rendered it

"a more excellent sacrifice." Wickliffe translates it, as Archbishop Magee observes, uncouthly, but in the full sense of the original, "a much more sacrifice;" and the controversy which has been had on this point is, whether this epithet of "much more," or "fuller," refers to quantity or

quality; whether it is to be understood in the sense of a more abundant, or of a better, a more excellent sacrifice. Dr. Kennicott takes it in the sense of measure and quantity, as well as quality, and supposes that Abel brought a double offering of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fruit of the ground also. His criticism has been very satisfactorily refuted by Archbishop Magee; (Discourses on Atonement;) and Mr. Davison, who has written an acute work in reply to those parts of that learned

prelate's work on the atonement, which relate to the Divine origin of the primitive sacrifices, has attempted no answer to this criticism, and only observes that "the more abundant sacrifice is the more probable signification of the passage, because it is the more natural force of the term pleíona when applied to a subject, as thusían, capable of measure and quantity." This is but assumption; and we read the term in other passages of Scripture, (as in Matt. 6:25, "Is not the life more than meat,

and the body than raiment?") where the idea of quantity is necessarily excluded, and that of superiority and excellence of quality, is as necessarily intended. But why is this stress laid on quantity? Are we to admit the strange principle that an offering is acceptable to God, because of its quantity alone, and that the quantity of sacrifice, when even no measure has been prescribed by any law of God, has an absolute connection with the state of the heart of an offerer? Frequency or non-

frequency of offering might have some claim to be considered as this indication; but, certainly, the quantity of gifts, where, according to the opinion of those generally who adopt this view, sacrifices had not yet been subjected to express regulation, would be a very imperfect indication. If the quantity of a sacrifice could at all indicate, under such circumstances, any moral quality, that quality would be gratitude; but then we must suppose Abel's offering to have been eucharistic. Here, however,

the sacrifice of Abel was that of animal victims, and it was indicative of faith, a quality not to be made manifest by the quantity of an offering made, for the one has no relation to the other; and the sacrifice itself was, as we shall see, of a strictly expiatory character.

This will more fully appear, if we look at the import of the words of (he apostle in some views, which have not always been brought fully out in what has been more recently written on the subject. "By faith Abel

offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness, that he was Righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and by it, he being dead yet speaketh."

What is the meaning of the apostle, when he says that it was witnessed or testified to Abel that he was righteous? His doctrine is, that men are sinners; that all, consequently, need pardon; and to be declared, witnessed, or accounted righteous, are, according to his style of writing, the same as to be justified,

pardoned, and dealt with as righteous. Thus, he argues that "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness" - "that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness" - "that he received the sign of circumcision, a seal," a visible, confirmatory, declaratory, and witnessing mark "of the righteousness which he had by faith." In these cases we have a similarity so striking, that they can scarcely fail to explain each other. In both, sinful men are placed in the condition of righteous

men-the instrument, in both cases, is faith; and the transaction is, in both cases also, publicly and sensibly witnessed; as to Abraham, by the sign of circumcision; as to Abel, by a visible acceptance of his sacrifice, and the rejection of that of Cain.

But it is said, "St. Paul affirms that Abel, by the acceptance of his sacrifice, gained the testimony of God, that he was a righteous man. He affirms, therefore, that it was his personal habit of righteousness to which God

vouchsafed the testimony of his approbation, by that acceptance of his offering. The antecedent faith in God, which produced that habit of a religious life, commended his sacrifice, and the Divine testimony was not to the specific form of his oblations; but to his actual righteousness." (Davison's Inquiry into the Origin and Intent of Primitive Sacrifice.)

The objections to this view of the matter are many.

1. It leaves out entirely all consideration of the difference between the

sacrifice of Abel and that of Cain, and places the reason of the acceptance of one and the rejection of the other wholly in the moral character of the offerers; whereas St. Paul most unequivocally places the acceptance of Abel's offering upon its nature and the principle of faith which originated it. For, whether we translate the phrase above referred to, "a more excellent sacrifice," or "a more abundant sacrifice," it is put in contrast with the offering of Cain, and its peculiar nature cannot be left out of

the account. By Mr. Davison's interpretation, the designation given to Abel's offering by the apostle is entirely overlooked.

2. The "faith" of Abel, in this transaction, is also passed over as a consideration in the acceptance of his sacrifice. It is, indeed, brought in as "an antecedent faith, which produced the habit of a religious life," and thus immediately "commended the sacrifice;" but, in fact, on this ground any other influential grace or

principle might be said to have commended his sacrifice, as well as faith; any thing which tended to produce "the habit of a religious life," his fear of God, his love of God, as effectually as his faith in God. There is, then, this manifest difference between this representation of the case and that which is given by St. Paul, that the one makes "the habit of a religious life," the immediate, and faith but the remote reason of the acceptableness of Abel's gifts; while the other

assigns a direct efficacy to the faith of Abel, and the kind of sacrifice by which that faith was expressed, and of which it was the immediate result.

3. In this chapter the apostle is not speaking of faith under the view of its tendency to induce a holy life; but of faith as producing certain acts of very various kinds, which being followed by manifest tokens of the Divine favor, showed how acceptable faith is to God, or how it "pleases him," according to his own position laid down

in the commencement of the chapter - "Without faith it is impossible to please God." Abel had faith, and he expressed that faith by the kind of sacrifice he offered; it was in this way that his faith "pleased God;" it pleased him as a principle, and by the act to which it led, and that act was the offering of a sacrifice to God different from that of Cam. Cain had not this faith, whatever might be its object; and Cain accordingly did not bring an offering to which God had "respect." That which vitiated the offering

of Cain was the want of this faith, for his offering was not significant of faith; that which "pleased God," in the case of Abel, was his faith, and he had "respect" to his offering, because it was the expression of that faith, and upon his faith so expressing itself, God witnessed to him "that he was righteous."

So, certainly, do the words of St. Paul, when commenting upon this transaction, establish it against the author above quoted, that Abel's sacrifice was accepted, because of its

immediate connection with his faith, for, by faith he is said to have offered it; and all that, whatever it might be, which made Abel's offering differ from that of Cain, whether abundance, or kind, or both, was the result of this faith. So clearly, also, is it laid down by the apostle that Abel was witnessed to be "righteous," not with reference to any previous "habit of a religious life," but with reference to his faith; and not to his faith as leading to personal righteousness, but to his faith as expressing itself by

his offering "a more excellent sacrifice."

Mr. Davison, in support of his opinion, adopts the argument of many before him, that "the rest of Scripture speaks to Abel's personal righteousness. Thus, in St. John's distinction between Cain and Abel, 'wherefore slew he him? because his own marks were evil, and his brother's righteous.'

Thus in the remonstrance of God with Cain, that remonstrance with Cain's envy for the acceptance of Abel's offering is directed,

not to the mode of their sacrifice, but to the good and evil doings of their respective lives-' If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted, and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door.'" (Inquiry, &c.) With respect to the words in St. John, they may be allowed to refer to Abel's "personal righteousness," without affecting the statement of St. Paul in the least. It would be a bad rule of criticism fully to explain the comments of one sacred writer upon a transaction, the principle and nature of which he

explains professedly, by the remark of another, when the subject is introduced only allusively and incidentally. St. John's words must not here be brought in to qualify St. Paul's exposition; but St, Paul's exposition to complete the incidental allusion of St. John. Both apostles agreed that no man was righteous personally, till he was made righteous by forgiveness; accounted and witnessed righteous by faith; and both agree that from that follows a personal righteousness. If

St. John, then, refers to Abel's personal righteousness, he refers to it as flowing from his justification and acceptance with God,, and by that personal righteousness the

"wrath" of Cain, which was first excited by the rejection of his sacrifice, was, probably ripened into the "hatred" which led on his fratricide; for it does not appear that he committed that act immediately upon the place of sacrifice, but at some subsequent period;

and, certainly, it was not the antecedent holy life of Abel which first produced Cain's displeasure against his brother, for this is expressly attributed to the transactions of the day in which each brought his offering to the Lord. St. John's reference to Abel's personal righteousness does not, therefore, exclude a reference also, and even primarily to his faith as its instrumental cause, and the source of its support and nourishment; and, we may add, that it is St. John's rule, and must be the rule of every New

Testament writer, to regard a man's submission to, or rejection of, God's method of saving men by faith, as the best evidence of personal righteousness, or the contrary. As to Genesis 4:7, "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted; and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door," in order to show that it cannot be proved from this passage, that Abel's offering was accepted because of his personal righteousness, it is not necessary to avail ourselves of Lightfoot's view of it, who takes "sin" to be the

ellipsis of sin offering, as in many places of Scripture. For and against this rendering much ingenious criticism has been employed, for which the critics must be consulted. (4) The interpretation which supposes Cain to be referred to a sin offering, an animal victim "lying at the door," is, at best, doubtful; but if this be conceded, the argument framed upon the declaration to Cain, "if thou doest well, shalt not thou be accepted," as though the reason of the acceptance of Abel's sacrifice was in "well

doing" in the moral sense only, is wholly groundless, since the apostle so explicitly refers the reason of the acceptance of his sacrifice to his faith, as before established. It is enough to show that there is nothing in these words to contradict this, even if we take them in the most obvious sense, and omit the consideration that the Hebrew text has, in this place, been disturbed, of which there are strong indications. The passage may be taken in two views. Either to "do well," may mean to do as Abel had

done, viz. to repent and bring those sacrifices which should express his faith in God's appointed method of pardoning and accepting men, thus submitting himself wholly to GOD; and then it is a merciful intimation that Cain's rejection was not final; but that it depended upon himself, whether he would seek God in sincerity and truth. Or the words may be considered as a declaration of the principles of God's righteous government over men. "'If thou doest well," if thou art righteous and unsinning, thou shalt be

accepted as such, without sacrifice; "but if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door," and is chargeable upon thee with its consequence; thus, after declaring his moral condition, leaving it to himself to seek for pardon in the method established in the first family, and which Cain must be supposed to have known as well as Abel, or, otherwise, we must suppose that they had received no religious instruction at all from Adam their father. To the former view of the sense of the passage it cannot be

objected that to offer proper sacrifices from a right principle cannot be called, in the common and large sense "to do well," for even "to believe" is called "a Work" by Our Savior; and the sacrifice of Abel was, moreover, an act, or a. series of acts, which were the expressions of his faith, and, therefore, might be called a doing well, without any violence. Agreeably to this, the whole course of the submission of the Jews to the laws concerning their sacrifices, is often, in Scripture, designated by the terms obedience, and

ways, and doings. The second interpretation corresponds to the great axiom of moral government alluded to by St. Paul, "This do and thou shalt live," which is so far from excluding the doctrine of justification by faith, that it is the ground on which he argues it, inasmuch as it shuts out the justification of men by law when it has once been violated.

(4) Nearly all that can be said on this interpretation will be found in Magee's Discourses on the

Atonement, and Davison's Reply to his criticism, in his Inquiry into the Origin of Primitive Sacrifice.

If, then, it has been established that the faith of Abel had an immediate connection with his sacrifice; and both with his being accepted as righteous, that is, justified, in St. Paul's use of the term, to what had his faith respect? The particular object of the faith of the elders, celebrated in Hebrews 11, is to be deduced from the circumstances adduced as

illustrative of the existence and operation of this great principle, and by which it manifested itself. Let us illustrate this, and then ascertain the objects of Abel's faith also from the manner of its manifestation, from the acts in which it embodied and rendered itself conspicuous.

Faith is, in this chapter, taken in the sense of affiance in God, and, as such, it can only be exercised toward God as to all particular acts, in those respects, in which we have

some authority to confide in him. This supposes revelation, and, in particular, some promise or declaration on his part, as the warrant for every act of affiance. When, therefore, it is said that "by faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death," it must be supposed that he had some promise or intimation to this effect, on which, improbable as the event was, he nobly relied, and in the result God honoured his faith before all men. The faith of Noah had immediate respect to the

threatened flood, and the promise of God to preserve him in the ark which he was commanded to prepare. The faith of Abraham had different objects. In one of the instances which this chapter records, it respected the promise of the land of Canaan to his posterity, and also the promise of the heavenly inheritance, of which that was the type; which faith he publicly manifested by

"sojourning in the land of promise, as in a strange country," and "dwelling in

tabernacles," rather than taking up a permanent residence in any of its cities, because "he looked for a city which hath foundations." In the case of the offering of Isaac, he believed that God would raise his immolated son from the dead, and the ground of his faith is stated, in verse 18, to be the promise,

"in Isaac shall thy seed be called," The faith of Sarah respected the promise of issue, - "she judged him faithful who had promised," "By faith Isaac

blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come," which faith had for its object the revelation made to him by God as to the future lot of the posterity of his two sons. The chapter is filled with other instances expressed or implied; and from the whole, as well as from the nature of the thing, it will appear that when the apostle speaks of the faith of the elders in its particular acts, he represents it as having respect to some promise, declaration, or revelation of God.

This revelation was necessarily antecedent to the faith; but it is also to be observed, that the acts by which the faith was represented, when-ever it was represented by particular acts, and when the case admitted it, had a natural and striking conformity and correspondence to the previous revelation. So Noah built the ark, which indicated that he had heard the threat of the world's destruction by water, and had received the promise of his own and family's preservation, as well as

that of a selection of the beasts of the earth; to all which the means of preservation, by which his faith was represented, and which it led him to adopt, corresponded. When Abraham went into Canaan, at the command of God, and upon the promise that that country should become the inheritance of his descendants, he showed his faith by taking possession of it for them in anticipation, and his residence there indicated the kind of promise which he had received. When he lived in that promised land

in tents, though opulent enough to have established himself in a more settled state, the very manner in which his faith expressed itself, showed that he had received the promise of a "better country," which made him willing to be a "stranger and wanderer on earth;" for "they that say such things," says the apostle, namely, that they are strangers and pilgrims," confessing "it by these significant acts," declare plainly that they seek a country," "that is, a heavenly." Thus, also, when Moses' faith

expressed itself, in his refusing to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, this also clearly indicated that he had received the promise of something higher and more excellent than "the riches of Egypt," which he renounced, even "the recompense of the reward," to which, we are told, "he had respect." When his faith manifested itself by his forsaking Egypt at the head of his people, "not fearing the; wrath of the king," this indicated that he had received a promise of protection and success, and he, therefore,

"endured as seeing Him who is invisible."

If, then, all these instances show, that when the faith which the apostle commends exhibits itself in some particular act, that act has a correspondency to the previous promise of revelation, which faith must have for its ground and reason, then are we constrained to interpret the acts of Abel's faith, so as to make them also correspond with some antecedent revelation, or rather, we must suppose that the antecedent revelation,

though not expressly stated, (which is also the case in several other of the instances which are given in the chapter,) must have corresponded with them. His faith had respect to some previous revelation, and the nature of the revelation is to be collected from the significant manner in which he declared his faith in it.

Now that which Abel did, "by faith," was, if considered generally, to perform an act of solemn worship, in the confidence that it would be acceptable

to God. This supposes a revelation, immediate or by tradition, that such acts of worship were acceptable to God, or his faith could have had no warrant, and would not have been faith, but fancy. But the case must be considered more particularly. His faith led him to offer "a more excellent sacrifice" than that of Cain; but this as necessarily implies, that there was some antecedent revelation, to which his faith, as thus expressed, had respect, and on which that peculiarity of his offering, which

distinguished it from the offering of Cain, was founded; a revelation which indicated, that the way in which God would be approached acceptably, in solemn worship, was by animal sacrifices. Without this, too, the faith to which his offering, which was an offering of the firstlings of his flock, had a special fitness and adaptation, could have had no warrant in Divine authority. But this revelation must have included, in order to its being the ground of faith, as "the substance of things hoped for," a promise of a

benefit to be conferred, in which promise Abel might confide. But if so, then this promise must have been connected, not with the worship of God in general, or preformed in any way whatever indifferently, but with his worship by animal oblations; for it was in this way that the faith of Abel indicated itself, specially and distinctively. The antecedent revelation was, therefore, a promise of a benefit to be conferred, by means of animal sacrifice; and we are taught what this benefit was, by that which was actually received by

the offerer - "he obtained witness that he was righteous;" which, if the notion of his antecedent righteousness has been refuted, must be interpreted in the sense of a declaration of his personal justification, and acceptance as righteous, upon forgiveness of his sins. The reason of Abel's acceptance and of Cain's rejection is hereby made manifest; the one, in seeking the Divine favor, conformed to his established and appointed method of being approached by guilty men,

and the other not only neglected this, but profanely and presumptuously substituted his own inventions.

It is impossible, then, to allow the act of Abel, in this instance, to have been an act of faith, without allowing that it had respect to a previous and appropriate revelation; a revelation which agreed to all the parts of that sacrificial action, by which he expressed his faith in it. Had Abel's sacrifice been eucharistic merely, it would

have expressed gratitude, but not faith; or if faith in the general sense of confidence in God that he would receive an act of grateful worship, and reward the worshipper, it did not more express faith than the offering of Cain, who surely believed these two points, or he would not have brought an offering of any kind. The offering of Abel expressed a faith which Cain had not, and the doctrinal principles which Abel's faith respected, were such as his sacrifice visibly embodied. If it was not, then, an

eucharistic sacrifice, it was an expiatory one; and, in fact, it is only in a sacrifice of this kind, that it is possible to see that faith exhibited, which Abel had, and Cain had not. By subsequent sacrifices of expiation, then, is this early expiatory offering to be explained, and from these it will be obvious to what doctrines and principles of an antecedent revelation the faith of Abel had respect, and which his sacrifice, the exhibition of his faith, proclaimed. Confession of the fact of being a sinner

acknowledgment of the demerit and penalty of sin and death-submission to an appointed mode of expiation; animal sacrifice offered vicariously, but, in itself, a mere type of a better sacrifice, "the seed of the woman," appointed to be offered at some future period - the efficacy of this appointed method of expiation to obtain forgiveness and to admit the guilty into the Divine favor.

For these reasons, we think that the conclusion of many of our ancient

divines, so admirably embodied in the following words of Archbishop Magee, is not too strong, but is fully supported by the argument of the case, as founded upon the brief but very explicit declarations of the history of the transaction in Genesis, and by the comment upon it in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

"Abel, in firm reliance on the promise of God, and in obedience to his command, offered that sacrifice, which had been enjoined as the religious expression of his

faith; while Cain, disregarding the gracious assurances that had been vouchsafed, or at least disdaining to adopt the prescribed mode of manifesting his belief, possibly as not appearing to his reason to possess any efficacy or natural fitness, thought he had sufficiently acquitted himself of his duty in acknowledging the general superintendence of God, and expressing his gratitude to the Supreme Benefactor, by presenting some of those good things, which he thereby confessed to have been derived from

his bounty. In short, Cain, the first born of the fall, exhibits the first fruits of his parents' disobedience, in the arrogance and self sufficiency of reason rejecting the aids of revelation, because they fell not within its apprehension of right. He takes the first place in the annals of Deism, and displays, in his proud rejection of the ordinance of sacrifice, the same spirit, which, in later days, has actuated his enlightened followers, in rejecting the sacrifice of Christ."

If it should be asked, what evidence we have from Scripture, that such an antecedent revelation as that to which we have said Abel's faith must have had respect, was made, the reply is, that if this rested only upon the necessary inferences which, in all fairness and consistency of interpretation, we must draw from the circumstances of the transaction, when combined with the apostle's interpretation of it, the ground would be strong enough to enable us to defend it against both

the attacks of Socinians, and of those orthodox divines who, like Mr. Davison, would wrest it from us, as an unnecessary post to be taken in the combat with the impugners of the Christian doctrine of atonement, or one which is rather injurious than otherwise to the efficiency of the more direct argument. "Such expositions," says Mr. Davison, "do evil and disservice to truth; they bring in a wrong principle; they enforce a comment without a text. Such a principle is, undoubtedly,

wrong, and has been the source of much religious speculation." This we grant, and feel how important the caution is. But it does not here apply. It is not enough to say that "the text" is not in the "Mosaic history;" we must prove that it is not in the New Testament, or necessarily implied in its comments upon and inferences from Old Testament facts and relations.

The "text" itself, supposed to be wanting, may be there, and even "the

comment" of an inspired writer often supplies the test, and his reasoning the premises wanting, in so many words, in the brief and veiled narrative of Moses. An uninspired comment, we grant, has not this prerogative; but an inspired one has, which is an important consideration, not to be overlooked. When we say that the manna, which fell in the wilderness, represented the supply of the spiritual Israel with the true bread which comes down from heaven, Mr.

Davison might reply this is "the comment;"

but where is "the text?" We acknowledge that the text upon which this comment is hung, is not in the history of Moses; but the authority of this comment, and, if we may so speak, an implied

"text" itself, is to be found in the words of our Lord, who calls himself "that bread;" and in the words of St. Paul, who terms the manna the "spiritual" or typical bread. If we allege that the

"rock," which when smitten poured forth its stream to refresh the fainting Israelites, was a figure of Christ, it might, in like manner, be urged that "the text" is wanting, and, certainly, we should not gather that view from the history of Moses; yet "the comment" is not ours, but that of the apostle, who says "that Rock was Christ," which can only be understood as asserting that it was an instituted and appointed type of Christ. Where we have no intimations of such adumbrations in the

persons and trans. actions of the Old Testament, we are not at liberty to invent them, nor can we justly carry them beyond what is expressed by our inspired authority, or naturally and fairly inferred to be from it. On the other hand we are bound not to interpret the Old Testament without reference to the New; and not to disregard that light which the perfect revelation affords not only by its direct effulgence, but by its reflections upon the history of our redemption, up to the earliest ages.

If it be argued, from the silence of the Mosaic history, that such types and allusions were not understood as such by the persons among whom they were first instituted, the answer is, 1. That though they should not be supposed capable of understanding them as clearly as we do, yet it must be supposed, that the spiritual among them had their knowledge and faith greatly assisted by them, and that they were among those "wondrous things of the law," which were, in some measure, revealed to

those who prayed with David, that their eyes might be opened "to behold them," or otherwise they were totally without religious use during all the ages previous to Christianity, and we must come to the conclusion that the whole system of types was without edification to the Jews, and are instructive only to us. If we conclude thus as to types, we may come to the same conclusion as to the prophecies of Messiah, to the spiritual meaning and real application of many of which there appears to be

as little indication of a key as to the types. But this cannot be affirmed, for St. Peter tells us, that of this "'derivation the prophets searched diligently who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you; searching what or what manner of time the spirit which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow." The prophecies could, probably, be but dimly interpreted; but something was known of their general meaning, something important was

obtained by "searching" to reward the search into their import. The same discovery of the general import and bearing of the types, must also have rewarded a search equally eager and pious. If this is not allowed, then they were not types to the ancient Church, a position which is contradicted by St. Paul, who declares, as to one instance, which may serve for the rest, namely, the entering of "the priest alone once every year into the inner tabernacle," that by this "the Holy Ghost signified that the way to

the holiest was not yet made manifest," and that the tabernacle itself, including of course, its services, "was a figure for the time then present, in or during which gifts and sacrifices were offered."

But, 2. We have, in one of the instances before adverted to in Hebrews 11, a direct proof of a distinct revelation, which is nowhere recorded in the Mosaic history separate from the temporal promise in which it appears to have been involved. By faith Abraham, having received

the promise of Canaan as "a place which he should afterward receive for an inheritance," went to sojourn there; but by faith also he sojourned in this land of promise as a stranger, dwelling in tents, "for he looked for a city which had foundations," for the "heavenly state," and by that act he, and Isaac, and Jacob, "the heirs with him of the same promise," declared plainly that they

"desired a better country, even a heavenly." Of this better country they then

received a promise, which promise is not distinctly recorded in the history of Moses; and it must, therefore have been either included in the promise of Canaan, which was made to them and their descendants, as a type, an understood type, of the eternal and heavenly rest, which is agreeable to the allusions of St. Paul in other parts of the epistle; or else it was matter of separate and unrecorded revelation.

In either view the history of Moses is silent, and yet we

are compelled, by the comment of the apostle, and in opposition to the argument which Mr. Davison and others found upon that silence, to allow either a collateral revelation, separate from the promise of Canaan, or that that promise itself had a mystic sense which became the object of their faith; and thus the inspired comment of the apostle supplies a text wanting in the history, or an enlarged interpretation of that which is found in it.

With this case of Abraham, Mr. Davison is evidently perplexed, and feels how forcibly it bears against his own rules of interpreting the Mosaic history of the religion of those early ages. He justly contends against Grotius and Le Clerc, that the Object of the faith recorded in Hebrews 11: was not always a temporal one, But, then, he proposes to show "how God, without having granted to those patriarchs the explicit revelation of an eternal heavenly state, a revelation which is nowhere exhibited in the Pentateuch, trained

them to the aim and implicit persuasion of that eternal state by large and indefinite promises of being 'their God' and 'their great reward,'

promises to which the present life, as to them, furnished no adequate completion." Thus, then, we are to conclude, that the heavenly state to which these patriarchs looked, was a matter of entire inference from the promise that God would be "their God and their reward," and from the consideration that nothing had occurred to

them, in this present life, to be adequate to these promises. To the latter we may reply that, if this were the only ground of their faith, they could not have made the inference till the close of life; for how could they know that something adequate to these promises, if not previously explained to refer chiefly to the future state, might not yet, though after much delay, occur to them? But they had this faith from the very giving of the promises, and, therefore, it was not left to future inference from circumstances. With

respect to the former, that they inferred that there was a heavenly state, from the promise to Abraham, "I will be thy God," when no previous "explicit revelation" of a future state was made; it not only supposes that the patriarchs had no revelation at all of a future life, no knowledge of the soul's immortality, or of a general judgment, of which, indeed, "Enoch prophesied;" but it is inconsistent with the public and expressive action, (an action, probably, intended to be

instructive as a symbolical one to all with whom Abraham was connected in Canaan,) that he

"dwelt in tents," in order "to declare plainly that he sought a better country." This, surely, was not an action to be founded upon a probable, but still uncertain, inference from the unexplained general promise, "I will be thy GOD;" but one which was suited only to express a firm faith in an explicit revelation and a particular promise.

But the whole of this theory is swept away entirely by the declaration of the apostle, "These all died in faith, not having received the promises," that is, the things promised; "but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth;" strangers, not at home, pilgrims, journeying to it. Now this home, this better country which they sought, the apostle here expressly says was not to them matter of inference, but the

subject of "promises," in the faith of which they both lived and died.

In the case of Abel's offering, as in those just given, the inspired comment of the apostle supplies

"the text" to the history; or, in other words, it so illustrates and enlarges our knowledge of the transaction in its principles and antecedent circumstances, that we are bound to understand it not as persons who have not this additional information, or those who

choose to disregard it, but as it is explained upon authority not to be questioned. Abel, says the apostle, offered his more excellent sacrifice "by faith," and faith must have respect to a preceding revelation.

We have just seen what doctrinal principles were implied in the practice of expiatory sacrifices, and if Abel's sacrifice was of this kind, which is the only satisfactory account which can be given of it, we have no reason to suppose that it included any thing less or

lower than those appointed under the law, and which are expressly stated to be types and figures, and shadows of the evangelical expiation of sin. An antecedent revelation to this effect must be supposed as the ground of his faith; but we are not left wholly to this: we have an account, though brief, of such a revelation.

That the account is brief is no objection. What is written is not, for that reason, to be disregarded.

There were, doubtless, reasons sufficiently wise

why the history of the patriarchal ages was not more largely given. If it were only to exercise our diligence, and to lead us to resort to what has been called "the analogy of faith," and to interpret Scripture by Scripture, the reason would be important. In arguing from this brevity or silence, however, both against the Divine institution of primitive sacrifice, and the evangelical interpretation of the sacrifice of Abel, some writers are apt to overlook the fact, that the book of Genesis is but a

sketch of this period of ancient history; that it is so throughout, and that it nowhere professes to be more. Arguments of this kind, as that of Bishop Warburton, who thinks it strange that if sacrifice were of Divine institution, not more is said on so important a subject, seem, insensibly, to proceed upon the supposition that the book of Genesis was the ritual and directory of the patriarchal Church, as that of Leviticus was the ritual of the Jewish. The absence of any account of the institution and prescribed

mode of sacrifice might, in that case, have been thought 'strange; but k is a brief history, evidently intended only to be introductory to that of God's chosen people, the Jews, whose proper historiographer Moses, by Divine suggestion, became. Moses grounds no argument upon any part of it in favor of his own institutions, except it may be an implied one in favor of the peculiar relation of the Jews to God, as the seed of Abraham, to whom the land of Canaan was promised, and with whom

a special covenant was made. The history of Abraham he was, therefore, bound to relate more at length, and he has done so; but where no immediate application of former events was to be made in this way, and the object was merely that of brief general instruction, we can see no particular rules binding upon him to omit or to insert any thing, to dilate, or to contract his narrative. If we are to argue from the brevity or the omissions of the narrative of the book of Genesis, we may often fall into great

absurdities, as many have done; and it might, indeed, be almost as fairly argued from the silence of this rapid history of the antediluvian world, that no code of morals was Divinely enjoined before the giving of the ten commandments, as that sacrifices were not Divinely instituted before the mandates issued from Sinai; for the silence of the book of Genesis equally respects both. We rather choose to argue, that as moral obedience must respect a law, and authoritative law must be a

revelation from God; so as faith respects doctrine and promise, that doctrine and those promises, if faith be obligatory, must also be a revelation from God; and again, as we collect from God's displeasure against, or favor to certain kinds and courses of moral conduct, that man was under a law which respected morals; so also, from his acceptance of one kind of sacrifice, and his rejection of another, in the case of Cain and Abel, it will, for the same reason follow, that man was under a law of sacrifice, and more

especially since the sacrifices to which God, in after ages, had uniform and special respect, were of the same kind as that of Abel, - animal, vicarious, and expiatory. In morals, we must suppose either traditional or personal revelation, or else give to them a human origin or invention, and in worship we have only the same alternative; but to give to primitive morality one origin, and to primitive worship another; to ascribe one to God and another to man, is to form a very incongruous system, and to

involve ourselves in great difficulties. We must suppose Adam to have been an inspired teacher of morals, but to have left worship indifferent; or, if we exclude traditional revelation, and assume that every man was taught personally by God in those times, that God made revelations of his law, but none of his grace; that he revealed the standard by which every man might discover his sin and danger, but that he made no discovery of the means by which a man, painfully sensible of his guilt and

liableness to the punishment, might approach him so as to obtain his forgiveness and blessing.

But beside this, it is easy to collect, from the sacred record in the early part of Genesis, brief as it is, no unimportant information of the theology which existed in the first family even prior to the sacrifice of Abel. That man was under law is certain; that death was the penalty of sin is equally certain. That the first pair sinned, and that they did not die,

notwithstanding the law, were obvious facts. That the terms of their probation were changed, and that they were not shut out for ever from the Divine regard were circumstances equally clear; and also that they had means of approach to God, means of obtaining his favor, means of sanctification, means of obtaining eternal life, must also be necessarily inferred. Claims of justice and yearnings of mercy in God were seen at natural and legal variance and opposition; and if these

were harmonized, and harmonized they were, or "the Lamb" could not be said to have been slain "from the foundation of the world," then must we suppose that there was some indication of this "wisdom of God"

revealed for a practical end, the necessity of which must always have existed, to prevent despair on the one hand, and a presumptuous disregard of the Divine laws on the other. Though in figurative language, or symbolical action, the manifestation of this truth

might be made, yet it must have been substantially made, or it could not have been practical and influential. A veiled truth is yet a truth, though veiled. A shadow indicates the outline of the substances, though a shadow; and the sun, though shrouded with clouds, fills the hemisphere with light, though not with brightness, for day, however clouded, is far different from night. We cannot conceive of a theology at all suited, in any practical degree, to man's fallen state, unless it comprehend the

particulars we have given, as well as the knowledge of the existence and perfections of God; and if we find an express indication of the evangelical method of saving man by the interposition of the incarnate Son of God, we may be sure that, at least all that this indication, when fairly interpreted, contains was known to Abel before he offered his sacrifice; and, both from the brevity of the narrative and the office of Adam as the teacher of religion to his children, we might also

infer that this indication was matter of converse and explanation, though this latter consideration we shall not insist upon.

It is in the first promise that this indication is to be found, and here we shall join issue with Mr.

Davison as to its import, and the extent in which its meaning must have been understood in the first family.

In another part of this work it has been established, that this prophetic promise must be understood

symbolically, and that it contained the first manifestation of Messiah. This, indeed, Mr. Davison acknowledges, but denies that his Divine nature, incarnation, the vicarious nature of his sufferings, and their atoning efficacy, could be inferred from it. As his remarks contain all that can be said against the commonly received opinion that it contained an intimation of all these, we may quote them. They contain some truth and much error. "One object of faith has been always the same; that object the

Redeemer. The original promise in paradise created this prospect of faith to be the light and hope of the world forever. But that original promise could not be interpreted by itself into the several parts of its appointed completion. The general prediction of the redeeming seed,' It shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel,' though adequate in the mind of God, to the determinate form of the Christian redemption, could not be so deduced into its final sense by the

mind of man. And since there is no other promise or prediction extant, applicable to the faith of the first ages, and explanatory of the mode of the Christian redemption, we can justly ascribe no other knowledge of that redemption to those ages than such as is comprehended in the proper and apparent sense of the first evangelical promise, in which the particular notion of a sacrifice of expiation or atonement, or, indeed, of any sacrifice was then impossible to be

discovered. It was the office of later revelation to fill up the design of this promise, and revelation, alone, could do it. For the deductions of supernatural truth are not within the sphere of human intellect, they are not to be inferred as discoverable conclusions from one primary principle. A Redeemer being foretold, his Divine nature, his incarnation, the vicarious nature of his sufferings, his death, and the atoning efficacy of it, all these, though real connections of truth, comprehended with the

original promise, in the scheme of the Divine economy, came down to man, like new streams of light, by these separate channels, and when they are communicated in their proper form, then we know them; not before." (Inquiry, &c.)

One very misleading notion, as the reader will perceive from what has been already said, lies at the bottom of these remarks. It is assumed contrary to evidence, that the book of Genesis is a complete history of the

religious opinions of the patriarchs, and that they knew nothing on the subject of theology but what appears on the face of the account given by Moses, who touches their theological system but incidentally. We say that this notion is unfounded, not only because we must necessarily infer, that in order to be religious, nay even moral men, they knew much more than the rapid Mosaic sketch includes; but we conclude this fact on the authority of the inspired writers of the New Testament, Thus, for

instance, we have seen that Abraham had a revelation of a future state, and that Enoch prophesied of the "coming of the Lord to judgment, with thousands of his saints," though neither of those revelations are recorded by Moses. But though this is sufficient to show that the view taken of the primitive theology, by Mr. Davison, and those whose opinions he has undertaken to advocate, is far too narrow, and that his conclusions, from such premises, must be unsatisfactory; it is not on this ground that his notion

of the general and indefinite nature of the first promise shall be refuted. Let it be forgotten, for a moment, that Adam was naturally the religious head and religious teacher of his family; that there was always an inspiration in the Church of God; that the general promises and prophecies were adapted to excite inquiry; and that spiritual men would always, more or less, as now, be led into the mystery veiled under the letter and symbol; yet, taking the prophecy simply by itself, it will be obvious

from a careful consideration of it, that the view just given does not do it justice, and that it must have been more amply and more particularly.understood than Mr. Davison, in support of his hypothesis, would represent. He would have it taken so generally as to be incapable of interpretation "into the several parts of its appointed completion," and to be only able to convey some one general notion of a deliverer. But why are we to confine it to one general indistinct

impression? Why, though the several parts of this prophetic promise should be allowed to be comparatively obscure, and their impression to be general, should it not be considered in the parts of which it is actually composed? and why should not each part have been apprehended separately and distinctively, though yet obscurely? Of several parts the prophecy is, in fact, composed, and to these parts, as well as to the general impression made by the whole, must the attention of the

patriarchs have been necessarily directed. The Divine nature, the incarnation, the vicarious nature of Messiah's sufferings, and their atoning efficacy, we are told, came to no "by separate channels," and were not in any way to be apprehended in this promise. In their farther and full development we grant this; but let us see whether this promise,

"interpreted even by itself," must not have led the patriarchs many steps, at

least, toward all these doctrines.

The Divine nature of the promised Redeemer, we are told, was a separate revelation; but, surely, this promise clearly indicated that he was to be of a superior nature, not only to man, but to that fell spirit whom he was to subdue, and whose subtlety, power, and malice, our first parents had so lamentably experienced; that he was to deprive him of that dominion which he had acquired over man, and restore the world from the

evil effects which it had sustained from the success of his temptations. This was seen in the promise by an easy and natural interpretation, and the step from this to the absolute Divinity of this Restorer, or, at least, to an apprehension of the probability of it, was certainly not a large and difficult one. The blessings, too, which he was to procure for sinful man were of such a nature as to give the most exalted ideas of the being who could bring them back to man when forfeited by a most

righteous sentence. They were spiritual blessings. For, if our first parents were to derive any consolation or benefit from the promise in this life; if it was to turn their repentance to any account; or to give them any hope and confidence toward God, whom they had offended, to be assured that the head of the serpent should be bruised, then their attention must have been turned to spiritual blessings as the result of this, since in this life they neither obtained exemption from labor,

suffering, or death. Now those who adopt the principle of Mr. Davison, and will allow of no revelations in those ages being assumed but those which are recorded by Moses, are bound to allow that there was in the promise something which was intended to give religious hope and comfort to the first pair, and to their immediate posterity, or they cannot account for the existence of religious worship and the hope which it implies, since there is no other recorded promise of the same

antiquity, and they will allow nothing to be assumed beside what is written. If, then, this first promise ministered to the religious hope, faith, and comfort of our first parents, it turned that hope to the spiritual blessings which they had lost, namely, the favor of God and eternal life, and to these as coming to them through the bruising of the head of the serpent by the seed of the woman. The same conclusion we must come to, if we adopt what we appear compelled to do, on apostolic authority, the

doctrine of collateral expository revelations, for these would throw light upon the figurative and symbolic terms of the promise, and show much of its real and spiritual import. In either case we must resort to this promise as the source of that hope of pardon and spiritual victory, which, from the time it was given, became an inmate in the bosoms of faithful men, and animated them in their moral conflicts. Whoever, then, the seed of the woman might be, he was, in this very promise, exhibited as

the Restorer of the all-important spiritual blessings of the Divine favor, power over Satan, and eternal life, Thus their notions of his character, and, indeed, of his superior nature, would be still farther advanced.

But the bruising of the head of Satan, which could only be under-stood of a fatal blow to be inflicted on thrower which he had acquired over man, and which had displayed itself in the introduction of suffering and death, in the evil dispositions of men

toward each other, and all the miseries which so soon sprung up in society, directed their hope also to future blessings as to themselves and their posterity, which blessings could be no less than deliverance from the evils which the subtlety of the serpent had introduced, namely, as to them, deliverance from affliction and death; and, as to society, a return to primeval purity. Whether they looked for this deliverance by a renovation of the present world, or by the introduction of the

pious into another, we cannot say. If our first parents were, for some time, uncertain as to this point, the antediluvian family could not long remain so, since the doctrine of a future life was known to Enoch, and, if not before, was revealed to others by the fact of his translation, and he was but "the seventh from Adam." But whether by the renovation of the earth, and the restoration of the body of man to immortality in this world, or by the resurrection of the body and the glorification of the

soul in a future state, still was such a restoration implied in the promise, and the person by whom death was to be conquered and sin expelled from man's heart, and immortality and bliss restored, was still "the seed of the woman." That the Divinity of a being capable of bestowing such favors, was, at least, indicated in the first promise, is not, therefore, too strong a conclusion; and though new communications of this truth, coming through "separate channels," illustrated the text of this

revelation, yet in the channel of the original promise, through which came the first hope of "a Redeemer," we see those concomitant circumstances from which it could not but be inferred, that he was, at least, super human and super-angelic. He was the seed of the woman, and yet superior to "the archangel fallen" - and he was seen in that promise, as he is seen now, though with greater detail of circumstance, as the great medium of pardon, moral renovation, immortality, and eternal life.

It is equally untenable to say, that the doctrine of the incarnation was not to be deduced from the promise before us, but that this also came by "a separate channel." The farther revelation of this truth opened for itself various courses, but it is there also. The being there spoken of as superior to the serpent, and as so superior to man, even in his innocence and perfection, that he should subdue the power which had subdued Adam, and recover what Adam lost, was, nevertheless, to be "the seed of the woman:" to

be her offspring even in her fallen state; so that in truth so much of the doctrine of the incarnation was to be deduced from the promise, that this "seed of the woman" was at once to be man, and more than man. And then for the doctrine of his "vicarious sufferings," and their efficacy, why should we be compelled wholly to look for the first indication of this to revelations coming to man through separate and later channels? These, we again thankfully acknowledge, have been abundantly opened; but, if

we allow Adam and the patriarchs to have been men of but common powers of reflection, (though to them a very vigorous and even cultivated intellect might in justice be conceded,) then the first indication of this truth also must have been seen in the first promise. It was comparatively dim and obscure we grant; but there was a substantive manifestation of it; and, to say nothing of collateral instruction from God himself, it was apprehended in the first promise, not by difficult

and distant, but by near and natural inference, that the restoration of man should be effected by the sufferings of the Restorer. For what could be understood by the bruising of the heel of the seed of the woman in the conflict which was to spring from the enmity put between that seed, some one distinguished person so called, and the serpent, but a temporary injury and suffering? and why should he sustain the injury rather than any other descendant of the woman, except that the conflict, in which he

engaged, was in his character of Redeemer, coming forth to the struggle for man's sake, and for man's rescue? As he was a being superior to man, and yet man, then is there an indication of his incarnation; if of his incarnation, then it was indicated also that his sufferings were voluntary, for to suffer could not spring from his weakness who was able to subdue, but from the will of him who chose, in this way, to subdue the grand enemy. His suffering, then, was for man, and it was voluntary

suffering for man; and if voluntary, then was there a connection between this his temporary voluntary suffering, and the bruising of the serpent's head, that is, his conquest over Satan, and the rescue of man from his dominion; in other words, there was an efficacy in his sufferings which connected themselves, not by accident, but by appointment and institution, with man's salvation from those evils, spiritual and corporal, which had been induced by

the power and malice of the devil.

Interpreted then by itself, there is much more in this promise than Mr. Davison has discovered in it. It exhibited to man the means of his salvation; this was to be effected by the interposition of a being of a superior nature, made "the seed of the woman;" his office was to destroy the works of the devil; he exposed himself to voluntary sufferings for this end; these sufferings had a direct efficacy and connection with man's

deliverance from the power of Satan, and, therefore, we may add, with the justice of God, since Satan could have no power over man but by God's permission, which permission was a part of man's righteous punishment. This last consideration is of great importance. For as the patriarchs, with their lofty and clear notions of the majesty of the Divine being, could not suppose that Satan had obtained any victory over him, or that the conflict between the Redeemer and him was to be one of power merely,

since they must have known that he might at any time have been expelled from his usurped dominion by the fiat of the Almighty; so the dominion of Satan must have been regarded by them in the light of a judicial permission for the punishment of sin, and exhibiting the awful justice and sanctity of the law of God. It would, therefore, necessarily follow, in their reasonings on this subject, that the sufferings of the seed of the woman, expressed by the bruising of his heel, as they were demonstrated to be

voluntary on his part by the superior greatness of his nature, and were expressly appointed on the part of God, as appears from the very terms of the first promise, were connected with this exercise of punitive justice, and were designed to remove it. Here, then, the notion of satisfaction and atonement breaks in, and a basis was laid for the rite of expiatory sacrifice, and the conformity of that rite to the doctrine of the first promise is at once seen; it thus became a visible expression of the faith of

the fathers in this appointed method of man's deliverance.

There is nothing in this exposition of the import of the first promise which is so suggested by what we now know on these important subjects, as to be supposed out of the reach of the spiritually minded and reflecting part of the first family; and if so, then this promise may be considered as the basis of Abel's faith, and its doctrine as visibly embodied in what was peculiar in Abel's offering.

Even if we were not able to refer to a promise sufficiently definite to support such an expression of faith, the former view we have taken would still hold good, that ill faith necessarily supposes a previous revelation; and if faith, does, by its acts, refer to a particular revelation, then an actual previous revelation of some particular doctrine, object, or view, must necessarily be supposed, or it is not faith, but fancy and presumption.

It is vainly urged against this, by Mr. Davison, that the faith spoken of by St. Paul in Hebrews 11, had for its simple and general object, that "God is the rewarder of such as diligently seek him." For, though this is supposed as the ground of every act of faith, yet the special acts recorded have each their special object. Even, if it were not so, this general principle itself is not to be so generally and indefinitely interpreted, as Mr. Davison would have it, who tells us that the first, creed was "that God is a

rewarder," and that the other articles were given by successive and distant revelations. This is a partial and delusive statement; for, from this very text, which surely Mr. Davison had no right to curtail, another article is to be assigned to the first creed, namely, that God is not merely a rewarder, but a rewarder of those "that diligently seek him."

Even with respect to the first, as Mr. Law justly observes, "God cannot be considered as a rewarder of mankind in any other sense

than as he is a fulfiller of his promises made to mankind in the covenant of Messiah. For God could not give, nor man receive, any rewards or blessings, but in and through one Mediator, Christ Jesus." (Confutation of Warburton.) But we may add, that the rewarding mentioned by the apostle is connected with "seeking" him. Only to such he was or is a reward "who diligently seek him," and this seeking or worshipping God supposes some appointed instituted method of approaching him, and which, therefore, must be

regarded by an acceptable faith, and recognized by its external acts. This is not mere inference, for both Cain and Abel believed that "God is, and that he is a rewarder," and they both sought him; but they sought him differently, and to Abel only and to his offering, that is, to his mode of

"seeking" God, his Maker had respect. But farther, the whole chapter shows that, beside this general principle, the acts of faith there recorded reposed on antecedent revelations,

either general or specific, which accorded with them. Noah's faith respected the promise of his preservation in the ark; Abraham's, that he should have a son, that his seed should possess the earthly Canaan, and he himself the heavenly Canaan; Moses' faith, in the first instance recorded of it, respected the promises of spiritual and eternal blessings to those who should renounce the

"pleasures of sin for a season," and in the second, the promise of God to deliver Israel, and to fulfill

the promise made to Abraham; and so also in the other instances given, the faith constantly respected some particular revelation from God. From all this, it will follow, that the apostle, in this chapter, did not intend to say that the object of faith, in any age whatever, was exclusively, that God is a rewarder of them who seek him, but that the elders who "obtained the

"good report" had faith in the word and promises of God, and for that had been honoured and rewarded.

He lays down two principles, it is true, which must be assumed before any special act of faith can be exercised - "That God is," or there could be no object of trust; and that he rewards them that "diligently seek him," or there could be no motive to prayer, or to ask his interposition in any case; but these principles being admitted, then every word and promise of God becomes an object of faith to good men, who derive from this habit of trusting in God, on the authority of his own engagements, that

courage and constancy by which they are distinguished, and are crowned with those rewards which he has always attached to faith.

And here, also, we may observe, that the notion stated above, that the mere belief by these ancient patriarchs that God is, and "that he is a rewarder," could not be at all apposite to the purpose for which this recital of the faith of the elders was addressed to the Hebrews. The object of it was clearly to induce the Jews who believed, not "to

cast away their confidence," their faith in Christ. But what adaptation to this end can we discern in the dry statement that Abel and Enoch believed that God is, and that he is "a rewarder?" Had the Hebrews renounced Christ, and turned Jews again, they would still have believed these two points of doctrine. There are but two views of this recital of the instances of ancient faith which can harmonize it with the apostle's argument and design. The first is to consider him as adducing this list of worthies as

examples of a steady faith in all that God had then revealed to man, and of the happy effects which followed.

The connection of this with his argument will then be obvious; for, by these examples, he urges the Hebrews to persevere in believing all that God had, "in these last days," revealed of his Son, Jesus Christ, in disregard of the dangers and persecutions to which they were exposed on that account; because thus they would share in the "good report" and in

the rewards of the "elders" of their own Church, and imitate the honorable piety of their ancestry. This is enough for our argument. But there is a second view, not to be slightly passed over, which is, that these instances of ancient faith are adduced by the apostle to prove that all the "elders" of the patriarchal and Jewish Churches had faith in the christ to come, and that, therefore, the Hebrews would be the imitators of their faith and the partakers of its rewards in "holding fast their confidence," their faith in

the same Christ who had already come, and whom they had received as such. Nor is even this stronger view difficult to be made out; for, though the different acts and exercises of faith ascribed to them have respect to different promises and revelations, some spiritual, some temporal, and some mixed, yet may we trace in all of them a respect, more or less immediate, to the leading object of all faith, the Messiah himself. We have seen that Abel's faith had respect to the method of mail's justification,

through the sufferings of the seed of the woman.

As that seed was appointed to remedy the evils brought into the world by the serpent, it is clear that eternal life could only be expected with reference to him, and Enoch's lofty faith in a future heavenly state consequently looked to him then, like ours now, as "the author of eternal salvation to them that obey him," - a conclusion, as to this patriarch, which is rendered stronger by his prophecy of Christ's coming to judgment "with

ten thousand of his saints." Noah's faith had immediate respect to the promise of God to preserve him in the ark; but it cannot be disconnected from his faith in the first promise and other revelations of the bruising of the head of the serpent by Messiah, a promise which had not been accomplished, and which, if he believed God to be faithful, he must have concluded could not fall to the ground, and that his preservation, in order to prevent the human race from extinction, and to bring in the seed of the

woman, in the fullness of time, was connected with it. His faith in God, as his deliverer, was bound up, therefore, we may almost say necessarily, with his faith in the Redeemer, and the one was the evidence of the other; for which reason, principally, it probably was, that the apostle says "that he became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." All the acts of Abraham's faith had respect, immediately or ultimately, to the promised seed. The possession of Canaan by his posterity, from whom the Messiah

was to spring, - the enjoyment of eternal life for himself, which was the final effect of his justification by faith in the seed in whom all nations were to be blessed, - the trans. action as to Isaac, when he believed tha t God would raise him from the dead, because he believed that the promise could not fail which had declared that the Messiah should spring from Isaac, - "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." The faith of Isaac, in blessing, or prophesying of the condition of Jacob and Esau, had still

reference to the Messiah, who was to descend from Jacob, not Esau, and the lot of whose posterity was regulated accordingly. The same observation may be made as to Jacob blessing the sons of Joseph, and Joseph's making mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and giving commandment concerning his bones: both related to the settlement of the tribes in Canaan, and both were complicated with the relation of that event to, and the peculiarity stamped upon Israel, by the expected coming of

Messias. When Moses, by faith, full of the hopes of immortality, renounced the temptations of the Egyptian court, the reproach he endured is called "the reproach of Christ," the apostle thus plainly intimating, that it was through the expected Messiah that he looked for the hope of eternal life," the recompense of the reward." His faith, as leader of the hosts of Israel, was connected with the promises of God to give them possession of the land of Canaan as their patrimony, as that was with

the advent of the Messiah among them "in the fullness of time." The faith of Rahab may appear more remotely connected with the promise of Messiah; but the connection may still be traced. She believed in the God of Israel as the true God; but by entertaining and preserving the spies, she also intimated her faith in the promise of God to give the descendants of Abraham the land of Canaan for their inheritance, which design she could only know from the promises made to

Abraham, either traditionally from him, who had himself long resided in Canaan, or by information from the spies; and if she had this knowledge in either way, it is not difficult to suppose her informed, also, as to the seed promised to Abraham, in which all the nations of the earth were to be blessed. I incline to think, that the faith of Rahab had respect not so much to any information she received from the spies, as to traditions derived from Abraham. Whether she stood, by her descent,

in any near relation to those with whom Abraham had more immediately conversed, or whether Abraham had very publicly testified in Canaan God's design to establish his posterity there, and to raise up from among them the holy seed, the Messiah, I will not pretend to determine; but there are two reasons which, at least, make it probable that Abraham gave a public testimony to religious truth during his residence in Canaan. The first is, his residence in tents; thereby

"declaring plainly" says the Apostle Paul,

"that he sought a better country, even a heavenly;" that is, declaring it to the Canaanites, or the action would have had no meaning, declaring this doctrine to the people of his own age. The second is, that the same apostle gives it as a reason for the preservation of Rahab, that she believed, while those "that believed not" perished, meaning plainly the rest of the Canaanites.

Now, what were they to believe, and why were they

guilty for not believing? The only rational answer to be given is, that they had had the means of knowing the designs of God, as to Abraham and his posterity, from whom the promised Messiah was to spring; and that, not crediting the testimony given first by Abraham, and which was afterward confirmed by the wonders of Egypt, but setting themselves against the designs of God, they "perished" judicially, while Rahab, on account of her faith in these revelations, was preserved.

With respect to "Gideon, and Barak, and Samson, and Jephthah, and Daniel, and Samuel," they were judges, kings, and conquerors. They had a lofty faith in the special promises of success, which God was pleased to make to them; but that faith, also, sprung from, and was supported by, the special relation in which their nation stood to Jehovah; they were the seed of Abraham; they held their land by the grant of the Most High; they were all taught to look for the rising of the mighty prince

Messiah among them; and their faith in special promises of success, could not but have respect to all these covenant engagements of God with their people, and may be considered as in no small degree grounded upon them, and, in its special acts, as an evidence that they had this faith in the deeper and more comprehensive promises. Certain it is, that one of them mentioned in this list of warriors, David, does, in the very songs in which he celebrates his victories, almost constantly blend

them with the conquests of Messiah; which is itself a marked and eminent proof of the connection which was constantly kept up in the minds of the pious governors of Israel between the political fortunes of their nation and the promises which respected the seed of Abraham. As to the prophets, also mentioned by the apostle, they were constantly made the channels of new revelations as to the Messiah, and their faith, therefore, had an immediate reference to him; and for the sufferers

in the cause of religious truth, so honorably recorded, the martyrs of the Old Testament who had "trial of cruel mockings and scourging, were stoned, sawn asunder," &c, they are all represented as supported by their hope of immortality and a resurrection; blessings which, from the first, were acknowledged to come to man only through the appointed Redeemer. Thus the faith of all had respect to Christ, either more directly or remotely; and, if farther proof were necessary, all that has been

said is crowned by the concluding sentence of the apostle - "and these all having obtained a good report, through faith, received not the promise, God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect;" which "better thing," whether it mean the personal appearance of Messiah, or their reception into heaven by a resurrection, which God determined should not take place as to the Church separately, but in a body, proves that not only did their faith look back to

special promises of succor, deliverance, and other blessings; but was constantly looking forward to Christ, and to the blessings of a resurrection and eternal life, which he was to bestow. This, he affirms, too, was the case with all whom he had mentioned - "these all died in the faith;" but in what faith did they die? Not the faith they had in the promises of the various deliverances mentioned in the chapter; those special acts of faith were past, and the special promises to which they were directed

were obtained long before death: they died in the faith of unaccomplished promises-the appearance of Messiah, and the obtaining of eternal life through him.

Enough has been said to prove, that the sacrifice of Abel was expiatory, and that it conformed, as an act of faith, to some anterior revelation. If that revelation were only that which is recorded in the first promise, on which some remarks have been offered, Abel's faith accorded with its general

indication of the doctrine of vicarious suffering; but his visibly representing his faith in these doctrines, by an animal sacrifice, is not to be resolved into the invention and device of Abel, though he himself should be assumed to have been the first to adopt this rite, unless we suppose him to have been under special direction. It is very true, and a point not to be at any time lost sight of, that the open and marked acceptance of Abel's sacrifice was a Divine confirmation of the mode of approaching him by

animal sacrifice; and seems to have been intended as instructive and admonitory to the world, and to have invested this mode of worship with a renewed and more signal stamp of Divine appointment than heretofore. That in this light it was considered by the apostle, appears plainly deducible from his words, "and by it, (his sacrifice,) he being dead, yet speaketh." By words more emphatic he could not have marked the importance of that act, as an act of public and sanctioned instruction. Abel "spoke" to all

succeeding ages, and continues to speak, not by his personal righteousness, not by any other circumstance whatever, but by his sacrifice, (for with thutas understood, must auths agree;) and in no way could he, except by his sacrifice as distinct from that of Cain, speak to future ages, and as that sacrifice taught how sinful guilty men were to approach God, and was a declaration of the necessity of atonement for their sins. We should think this a sufficient answer to all who complain of the want of an

express indication of the Divine appointment of animal expiatory sacrifice in the first family. The indication called for is here express, since this kind of sacrifice was accepted, and an offering, not animal and not expiatory, was as publicly rejected; and since, also, Abel, as we may conclude from the apostle's emphatic words, did not act in this affair merely as a private man; but as one who was, by his acts, to instruct and influence others - "by it he, being dead, yet," even to this day, "speaketh."

Decidedly, however, as this circumstance marked out a sanctioned method of approaching God, we think that Abel rather conformed to a previously appointed sacrificial institution than then, for the first time, offered an animal and expiatory sacrifice, though it should be supposed to be under a Divine direction. For Cain could not have been so blamable had he not violated some rule, some instituted practice, as to the mode of worship; and, after all that has been said, the clothing of our first parents with the skins

of beasts, cannot so well be accounted for as by supposing those skins to have been taken from animals offered in sacrifice.

But whether this typical method of representing the future atonement first took place with Abel, or previously with Adam, a Divine origin must be assigned to it. The proof of this has been greatly anticipated in the above observations, which have been designed to establish the expiatory character of Abel's offering; but a few

additional remarks on this subject may not be useless.

The human invention of primitive animal sacrifice is a point given up by Mr. Davison, and other writers on the same side, if such sacrifices can be proved expiatory. The human invention of eucharistic offerings they can conceive; and Mr. Davison thinks he can find a natural explanation of the practice of offering animal sacrifice, if considered as a confession of guilt; but for "that condition of animal sacrifice, its expiatory

atoning power," he observes, "I confess myself unable to comprehend how it can ever be grounded on the principles of reason, or deduced from the light of nature. There exists no discernible connection between the one and the other. On the contrary, nature has nothing to say for such an expiatory power, and reason every thing against it. For that the life of a brute creature should ransom the life of a man; that its blood should have any virtue to wash away his sin, or purify his con-science, or redeem his

penalty; or that the involuntary sufferings of a being, itself unconscious and irrational, should have a moral efficacy to his benefit or pardon, or be able to restore him with God, these are things repugnant to the sense of reason, incapable of being brought into the scale of the first ideas of nature, and contradictory to all genuine religion, natural and revealed. For as to the remission of sin, it is plainly altogether within the prerogative of God, an act of his mere mercy; and since it is so, every thing

relating to the conveyance and the sanction, the profession, and the security of it, can spring only from his appointment."

But this being allowed, and nothing can be more obvious, then it follows, that the patriarchal sacrifices, if proved to be expiatory, as the means of removing wrath from offenders, and of conveying and sanctioning pardon, must be allowed to have had Divine institution, and the notion of their being of human device, must, in consequence, be given up.

In proof of this, we have seen that Abel's justification was the result of his faith, and that this faith was connected with that in his sacrifice which distinguished it from the offering of Cain; and thus its expiatory character is established by its having been the means to him of the remission of sin; and the appointed medium of the "conveyance" and "security" of the benefit. We have also seen, that Noah's burnt offering was connected with the averting of the wrath of God from the future world,

so that not even its wickedness should lead him again "to destroy all flesh" by a universal flood; that the sacrifices of the friends of Job (5) were of the same expiatory character; and that the reason for the prohibition of blood was, under both dispensations, the patriarchal and the Mosaic, the same. To these may be added two passages in Exodus, which show that animal sacrifices, among the patriarchs, were offered for averting the Divine displeasure, and that this notion of sacrifice was

entertained by the Israelites, previous to the giving of the law. "Let us go, I pray thee, three days' journey into the desert, and sacrifice unto the Lord our God, lest he fall upon us with pestilence, or with the sword," Exodus 5:3. "Thou must give us also sacrifices and burnt offerings, that we may sacrifice unto the Lord our God," Exodus 10:25, 26. The remark of Dr. Richie (Pec. Doc.) is here pertinent. "In these two passages Moses and Aaron speak of sacrificing not as a new and uncommon thing, but as a

usual mode of worship, with which Pharaoh was as well acquainted as themselves, consequently a thing that was not a late or new invention." And in pursuance of the same argument it may be noted, that Moses, even in the law, nowhere speaks of expiatory sacrifice as a new institution, a rite which was henceforward to be considered as bearing a higher character than formerly; but as a thing familiar to the people.

Now such an intimation would, doubtless, have

been necessary on the very ground just stated, the repugnancy of animal sacrifices, considered as expiatory, to nature and reason; but to prepare them for such a change, for an institution so repugnant to the former class and order of their notions on this subject, there is nothing said by Moses, no intimation of an alteration in the character of sacrifice is given; but a practice manifestly familiar is brought under new and special rules, assigned to certain persons as the sacrificers, and to certain

places, and appropriated to the national religion, and the system of a theocratical government. Whence, then, did this familiarity with the notion of expiatory sacrifice arise among the Israelites? If the book of Genesis were written previously to the law, and they collected the notion from that, then this is proof that they understood the patriarchal sacrifices to be expiatory; and if, as others think, that book was not written the first in the series of the Pentateuch, but the last, they had the

notion from tradition and custom.

(5) Mr. Davison, in pursuance of his theory, that the patriarchal sacrifices were not expiatory, has strangely averred, that this transaction is "a proof of the efficacy of Job's prayer, not of the expiatory power of the sacrifice of his friends." Why, then, was not the prayer efficacious, without the sacrifice! And how could the "burnt offering" of his friends give efficacy to his prayer, unless by way of expiation?

What is the office of expiatory sacrifice, but to avert the anger of God from the offerer? This was precisely the effect of the burnt offering of Eliphaz and his friends: that it was connected with the prayer of Job, no more alters the expiatory character of that offering, than the prayers which accompanied such offerings under the law, Though we think that the evidence of Scripture is of sufficient clear, ness to establish the Divine origin of the antediluvian sacrifices; and-with Hallet, (in Hebrews 11:4,) regard

the public Divine acceptance of Abel's sacrifice as amounting to a demonstration of their institution by the authority of God, the argument drawn from the natural incongruity of sacrificial rites, on which so many writers have forcibly dwelt, ought not to be overlooked. It comes in to confirm the above deductions from Scripture, and though it has been sometimes attacked with great ingenuity, it has never been solidly refuted. "It is evident," says Delany, (Revelation Examined,)

"that unprejudiced reason never could antecedently dictate, that destroying the best of our fruits and creatures could be an office acceptable to God, but quite the contrary. Also, that if did not prevail from any demand of nature is undeniable, for I believe that no man will say that we have any natural instinct or appetite to gratify in spilling the blood of an innocent, inoffensive creature upon the earth, or burning his body upon an altar. Nor could there be any temptation from appetite to do this in those

ages, when the whole sacrifice was consumed by fire, or when, if it were not, yet men wholly abstained from flesh."

The practice cannot be resolved into priestcraft, for no order of priests was then instituted; and if men resolve it into superstition, they must not only suppose that the first family were superstitious, but, also, that God, by his acceptance of Abel's sacrifice, gave his sanction to a superstitious and irrational practice; and if none will be so bold as this, there remains no

other resource, that to contend for its reasonableness, in opposition to the argument just quoted from Delany; and to aid the case by assuming, also, that it was the dictate of a delicate and enlightened sentimentalism. This is the course taken by Mr. Davison, who has placed what others have urged with the same intent, in the most forcible light, so that, in refuting him, we refute all. To begin with "the more simple forms of oblation;" those offerings of the fruits of the earth,

which have been termed eucharistical, "reason," says Mr. Davison, "seems to recognize them at once; they are the tokens of a commemorative piety, rendering to the Creator and supreme Giver a portion of his gifts, in confession of his original dominion in them, and of his continued favor and beneficence." But this is very far from being a rational account of even simple thank offerings of fruits; supposing such offerings to have been really made in those primitive times. Of this, in

fact, we have no evidence, for we read only of one oblation of this kind, that of Cain, and it was not accepted by God. But waiving that objection, and supposing such offerings to have formed a part of the primitive worship, from whence, we may ask, did men obtain the notion, that in such acts they gave back to the supreme Giver some portion of his gifts? It is not, surely, assumed by the advocates of this theory, that the first men were like those stupid idolaters of following ages, who thought that the deities

themselves feasted upon the oblations brought to their temples. On the contrary, their views of God were elevated and spiritual; and whenever such a Being is acknowledged, it is clear, that the notion of giving back any thing to him, can only be a rational one, when he has appointed something to be done in return for his gifts, or to be appropriated to his service; which leads us at once to the doctrine of a Divine institution. The only rational notion of a return to God as an

acknowledgment for his favors, when notions of his spirituality and independence are entertained, is that of gratitude, and thanksgiving, and obedience. These form "a reasonable service;" but when we go beyond these, we may well be at a loss to know

"what we can give unto him." If he requires more than these, as acknowledgments of our dependence and his goodness, how should we know that he requires

more, unless we had some revelation on the subject? And if we had a general revelation, importing that something more would be acceptable, how should we be able to fix upon one particular thing, as the subject of such an oblation, more than another 1 A Divine institution would invest such offerings with a symbolical, or a typical character, or both; and then they would have a manifest reason; but, assuredly, independent of that, they would rest upon no rational ground whatever; there could be

no discernible connection between the act and the end, in any case where the majesty and spirituality of God were recognized. Mr. Davison assumes that, though "the prayer or the oblation cannot purchase the favor of God, it may make us fitter objects of his favor." But, we ask, even if we should allow that prayer makes us fitter objects of his favor, how we could know even this without revelation; or, if we could place this effect to the account of prayer by something like a rational deduction, how we could

get the idea, that to approach a spiritual Being, with a few handfuls of fruit gathered from the earth, and to present them in addition to our prayers, should render us the "fitter objects" of the Divine beneficence? There is no rational connection between the act and the end, on which to establish the conclusion.

Reason failing here, recourse is had to sentiment.

"In the first dawn of the world, and the beginnings of religion, it is reasonable

to think that the direction of feeling and duty was more exclusively toward God. The recent creation of the world, the revelations in paradise, and the great transactions of his providence, may well be thought to have wrought a powerful impression on the first race, and to have given them, though not a purer knowledge, yet a more intimate and a more intense perception, of his being and presence. - The continued miracle of the actual manifestations of God would enforce the same impressions upon

them. These having less scope of action in communion with their fellow creatures, in the solitude of life around them, in the great simplicity of the social state, and the consequent destitution of the objects of the social duties; their religion would make the acts of devotion its chief monuments of moral obligation. Works of justice and charity could have little place. Works of adoration must fill the void. And it is real action, not unembodied sentiment, which the

Creator has made to be the master principle of our moral constitution. From these causes some boldness in the form of a representative character, some ritual clothed with the imagery of a symbolical expression, would more readily pass into the first liturgy of nature. Not simple adoration, not the naked and unadorned oblations of the tongue; but adoration invested in some striking and significative form, and conveyed by the instrumentality of material tokens, would be most in accordance with the strong

energies of feeling, and the insulated condition of the primitive race."

(Primitive Sac.)

Two or three observations will be sufficient to dissipate all these fancy pictures. 1. It is not true, that the "recent creation of the world, the revelations in paradise," &c, made that great moral impression upon the first men which is here described. That impression did not keep our first parents from sin; much less did it produce this effect upon Cain and his descendants; nor upon

"the sons of God," the race of Seth, who soon became corrupt; and so wickedness rapidly increased, until the measure of the sin of the world was filled up. 2. It is equally unfounded, that in that state of society "works of justice and charity could have little place, and that works of adoration must fill the void;" for the crimes laid to the charge of the antediluvians are wickedness, and especially violence, which is opposed both to justice and to charity; and it is impossible to suppose any state of society existing, since the

fall, in which both justice and charity were not virtues of daily requirement, and that in their constant and vigorous exercise.

Cain, for instance, needed both, for he grossly violated both in hating and murdering his brother.

3. That strongly active devotional sentiment which Mr. Davison supposes to exist in those ages, which required something more to embody and represent it than prayer and praise, and which with so much plastic

energy is assumed to have clothed itself "with the imagery of a symbolical expression," is equally contradicted by the facts of the case. There was no such excess of the devotional principle. On Mr. Davison's own interpretation of the "more abundant sacrifice,"

more in quantity, one of the two brothers, first descended from the first pair, was deficient in it; the rapidly spreading wickedness of man shows that the religious sentiment was weak and not powerful; it is not seen

even in the perverted forms of idolatry and superstition, for neither is charged upon the antediluvians, but moral wickedness only; and instead of their having "a more intense perception of the being and presence of God," as Mr. Davison imagines for them, Moses declares "the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of man to be only evil continually," and that even long before the flood, and while men were alive who had conversed with Adam. Thus pass away the fancies on which this theory is

built; nor is that of Bishop Warburton better supported, who resolves these early oblations into a representation by action, arising out of the

"defects and imperfections of the primitive language;" for of these defects and imperfections there is not only not the least evidence, but the irresistible inference from the narrative of Moses is, that a language was in use in the first family sufficiently copious for all subjects of religion, as well as for the common intercourse of life.

This notion also farther involves the absurdity and contradiction, that when man was created in perfection, he should not be endowed with the power of embodying his thoughts in language.

If, then, the presentation of the mere fruits of the earth to God as thank offerings and acknowledgments of dependence, cannot be reason-ably accounted for without supposing a Divine institution, the difficulty is increased when animal oblations are added to these offerings, and

considered also as merely eucharistical. All the difficulties just mentioned lie with equal force against such a designation of them, with these additional considerations, 1. That the putting beasts to death is an act farther removed from the idea of a mere oblation, since nothing would, without a revelation, appear less acceptable to a merciful and benevolent being. 2. A moral objection would also interpose. Man's dominion of the creatures was from God; but it was to be exercised, like his power of

every other kind, upon his responsibility. Wanton cruelty to animal must, of necessity, have been considered a moral evil. To inflict pain and death upon even the noxious animals, without so clear a necessity as should warrant it, and without its being necessary to the "subduing" of the earth, could not be thought blameless, much less upon those innoxious animals which, from the beginning, were the only subjects of sacrifice. This would be felt the more strongly before flesh had been permitted to man for food, and when, so

to speak, a greater sacredness was thrown around the life of the domestic animals than afterward; nor can it appear reasonable, even if we were to allow that a sort of sentimentality might lead man to fix upon the oblation of slain beasts as an expressive ritual to be added to the "Liturgy of Nature;"

that, without any authority, any intimation from Heaven that such sacrifices would be well pleasing to God, men could conclude that a mere sentimental

notion of ceremonial fitness, and giving "boldness to the representative character" of worship, would be a sufficient moral reason to take of their flocks and herds, and shed their blood and burn their flesh upon altars, Mr.

Davison endeavors to meet the objection to the natural incongruity of animal sacrifices as acts of worship, by distinguishing between the two conditions of animal sacrifice," the guilt of the worshipper and the expiation of his sin."

Expiatory sacrifice, we have seen, he gives up, as not for a moment to be referred to human invention, but thinks that there was no natural incongruity in the offering of animals as a mere acknowledgment of guilt, and as a confession of sin and the desert of death. But still, if we could trace any connection between this symbolical confession and the real case of man, which is difficult, if not impossible, what could lead him to the idea that more than simple confession of sin by the lips, and the

penitent feelings of the heart, would be acceptable to God, if he had received no revelation on the subject? and if this, like the former, were a device of mere ceremonial sentimentalism, it was still too frail a ground to justify his putting the inferior creatures to death, without warrant from their Creator and Preserver. It is also equally unfortunate for this theory, and, indeed, wholly fatal to it, that the distinction of clean and unclean beasts existed, as we have already seen, before the flood. Upon

what, then, was this distinction founded? Not upon their qualities as good for food or otherwise, for animals were not yet granted for food; and the death of one animal would therefore have been just as appropriate as a symbol of gratitude, or as an acknowledgment of the desert of death, as another, - a horse as a heifer, a dog as a lamb. Nay, if animals were intended to represent (he sinner himself, unclean and ferocious animals would have been fitter types of his fallen and sinful state; and that they

were to be clean, harmless, and without spot, shows that they represented some other. The distinction of clean and unclean, however, did exist in that early period, and it is only to be accounted for by referring it to a sacrificial selection, and that upon Divine authority.

To the human invention of sacrifice, the objection of "will worship" has also been forcibly and triumphantly urged. "Who hath required this at your hands?" "In vain do they worship me, teaching for

doctrines the commandments of men." This has the force of an axiom, which, if it ought not to be applied too rigidly to the minutiae of forms of worship when they connect themselves with authorized leading acts, yet must have a direct application to a worship which, in its substance and leading circumstance, was eminently sacrificial, if it be regarded as wholly of human device. "Thus," says Hallet, "Abel must have worshipped God in vain, if his sacrificing had been merely a commandment of

his father Adam, or an invention of his own;" and he justly asks, "why we do not now offer up a bullock, a sheep, or a pigeon, as a thank offering after any remarkable deliverance, or as an evidence of our apprehensions of the demerit of sin?" The sure reason is, because we cannot know that God will accept such "will worship," and so conclude that we should herein worship God "in vain."

The Divine institution of expiatory sacrifice being thus carried up to the first

ages, and to the family of the first sinning man, we perceive.he unity of the three great dispensations of religion to man, the patri. archal, the levitical, and the christian, in the great principle, "and without the shedding of blood there is no remission" But one religion has been given to man since his fall, though gradually communicated. "This may be best denominated the ministry of reconciliation, for its exclusive object, however modified externally, is to satisfy God's justice,

through the instrumentality of the woman's predicted seed; to restore fallen man to the Divine image of holiness, by the agency of the gracious Spirit; and thus, without compromising any one of God's attributes, to reconcile an apostate race to their offended Creator." (Faber's Horae Mos.) We have now adduced the Scriptural evidence of the atonement made by the death of Christ for the sins of the world; a doctrine not speculative and indifferent, but vital to the whole scheme of Christianity; a

doctrine which tends to produce the most awful sense of sin, and to afford the most solemn motive to repentance; which at once excites the most sublime views of the justice and mercy of God, and gives the most affecting exhibition of the compassion and love of Christ; which is the only ground of faith in the pardoning love of God, and -the surest guard against presumption; and which, by opening access to God in prayer, keeps before man a safe and secure refuge amidst the troubles of life, and in the prospect of

eternity. It is the only view, too, of the death of Christ which interprets the Holy Scriptures into a consistent and unequivocal meaning.

Their language is wholly constructed upon it, and, therefore, can only be interpreted by it; it is the key to their style, their allusions, their doctrines, their prophecies, their types. All is confused and delusive without it; all clear, composed, and ordered, when placed under its illumination. To Christ under his sacrificial character, as well as in his

regal claims, "give all the prophets witness;" and in this testimony all the services of the tabernacle, and the rights of the patriarchal age concur. Christ, as "the lamb of God, was slain from the foundation of the world;" and when the world shall be no more, he will appear before his glorified saints, as "the Lamb newly slain,"

shedding upon them the unabated efficacy of his death for ever. Nor is it a doctrine to be rejected without imminent peril. - "Verily, verily, I say unto

you, except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, you have no life in you;" words which, as Whitby justly observes,

"clearly declare the necessity of faith in his body given, and his blood shed for the remission of sins, in order to justification and salvation."

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43 BENEFITS DERIVED TO MAN FROM THE ATONEMENT - JUSTIFICATION

When we speak of benefits received by the human race, in consequence of the atonement of Christ, the truth is, that man, having forfeited good of every kind, and even life itself, by his transgression, all that remains to him more than evil in the natural world, and in the dispensations of general and particular providence, as well as all spiritual blessings put

within his reach by the Gospel, are to be considered as the fruits of the death and intercession of Christ, and ought to be gratefully acknowledged as such, We enjoy nothing in our own right, and receive all from the hands of the Divine mercy. We now, however, speak in particular of those benefits which immediately relate to, or which constitute what in Scripture is called our SALVATION; by which term is meant the deliverance of man from the penalty, dominion, and pollution of his sins; his

introduction into the Divine favor in this life; and his future and eternal felicity in another.

The grand object of our redemption was to accomplish this salvation; and the first effect of Christ's atonement, whether anticipated before his coming, as "the Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world," or when effected by his passion, was to place God and man in that new relation, from which salvation might be derived to the offender.

The only relation in which an offended sovereign and a guilty subject could stand, in mere justice, was the relation of a judge and a criminal capitally convicted. The new relation effected by the death of Christ, is, as to God, that of an offended sovereign having devised honorable means to suspend the execution of the sentence of death, and to offer terms of pardon to the condemned; and, as to man, that as the object of this compassion, he receives assurance of the placableness of God, and

his readiness to forgive all his offences, and may, by the use of the prescribed means, actually obtain this favor.

To this is to be added another consideration. God is not merely disposed to forgive the offences of men upon their suit and application; but an affecting activity is ascribed in Scripture to the compassion of God. The atonement of Christ having made it morally practicable to exercise mercy, and having removed all legal obstructions out of the way

of reconciliation, that mercy pours itself forth in ardent and ceaseless efforts to accomplish its own purposes, and not content with waiting the return of man in penitence and prayer, "God is in Christ reconciling the world unto himself;" that is to say, he employs various means to awaken men to a due sense of their fallen and endangered condition, and to prompt and influence them (sometimes with mighty efficacy) to seek his favor and grace, in the way which he has himself ordained in his revealed

word. The mixed and checkered external circumstances of men in this present life is a providential arrangement which is to be attributed to this design; and, viewed under this aspect, it throws an interesting light upon the condition of mankind, unknown to the wisest among those nations which have not had the benefits of revealed religion, except that some glimpses, in a few cases, may have been afforded of this doctrine by the scattered and broken rays of early tradition. Nor has this been always

adverted to by those writers who have enjoyed the full manifestations of Divine truth in the Scriptures. By many, the infliction of labor, and sorrow, and disappointment upon fallen man, and the shortening of the term of human life, are considered chiefly, if not exclusively, as measures adopted to prevent evil, or of restraining its overflow in society. Such ends are, doubtless, by the wisdom of God, thus effected to a great and beneficial extent; but there is a still higher

design. These dispensations are not only instruments of prevention, but designed means of salvation, preparatory to, and co-operative with those agencies, by which that result can only be directly produced. The state of man shows, that he is under a checkered dispensation, in which justice and forbearance, mercy and correction, have all their place, and in which there is a marked adaptation to his state as a reprieved criminal; a being still guilty, but within the reach of hope. The earth is

cursed; but it yields its produce to man's toil; life is prolonged in some instances and curtailed in others, and is uncertain to all; we have health and sickness; pleasures and pains; gratifications and disappointment; but as to all, in circumstances however favored, dissatisfaction and restlessness of spirit are still felt; a thirst which nothing, earthly can allay, a vacuity which nothing in our outward condition can supply. There is a manifestation of mercy to save, as well as of wisdom

to prevent, and the great end of the whole is explained by the inspired record. "Lo all these things worketh God oftentimes with, man, to keep back his soul from the pit." His "goodness" is designed, to lead us "to repentance," his rod to teach us wisdom. "In the day, of adversity consider."

Another benefit granted for the same end, is the revelation of the will of God, and the declaration of his purposes of grace as to man's actual redemption. These purposes have been

declared to man, with great inequality we grant, a mystery which we are not able to explain; but we have the testimony of God in his own word, though we cannot in many cases trace the process of the revelation, that in no case, that in no nation, "has he left himself without witness." Oral revelations were made to the first men; these became the subject of tradition, and were carried into all nations, though the mercy of God, in this respect, was abused by that willful corruption of his truth of which all have

been guilty. To the Jews he was pleased to give a written record of his will; and the possession of this, in its perfect evangelical form, has become the distinguished privilege of all Christian nations, who are now exerting themselves to make the blessing universal, a result which probably is not far distant. By this direct benefit of the atonement of Christ, the law under which we are all placed is exhibited in its full, though reproving, perfection; the character of "Him with whom we have to do" is

unveiled; the history of the redeeming acts of our Savior is re-corded; his example, his sufferings, his resurrection, and intercession, the terms of our pardon, the process of our regeneration, the bright and attractive path of obedience, are all presented to our meditations, and, surmounting the whole, is that "immortality which has been brought to light by the Gospel." Having the revelation, also, in this written form, it is guarded against corruption, and, by

the multiplication of copies in the present day, it has become a book for family reading, and private perusal and study; so that neither can we, except willfully, remain ignorant of the important truths it contains, nor can they be long absent from the attention of the most careless; from so many quarters are they obtruded upon them.

To this great religious advantage we are to add the institution of the Christian ministry, or the appointment of men, who

have been them, selves reconciled to God, to preach the word of reconciliation to others; to do this publicly, in opposition to all contempt and persecution, in every place where they may be placed, and to which they can have access: to study the word of God themselves; faithfully and affectionately to administer it to persons of all conditions; and thus, by a constant activity, to keep the light of truth before the eyes of men, and to impress it upon their consciences.

These means are all accompanied with the influence of the Holy Spirit; for it is the constant doctrine of the Scriptures, that men are not left to the mere influence of a revelation of truth, and the means of salvation; but are graciously excited and effectually aided in all their endeavors to avail themselves of both. Before the flood, the Holy Spirit is represented as "striving" with men, to restrain them from their wickedness, and to lead them to repentance. This especially was his benevolent employ, as we

learn from St. Peter, during the whole time that "the ark was preparing," the period in which Noah fulfilled his ministry as "preacher of righteousness" to the disobedient world. Under the law, the wicked are said to "grieve" and "resist" the Holy Spirit; and good men are seen earnestly supplicating his help, not only in extraordinary cases, and for some miraculous purpose, but in the ordinary course of religious experience and conflict. The final establishment and the moral effects

flowing from Messiah's dominion, are ascribed, by the prophets, to the pouring out of the Spirit, as rain upon the parched ground, and as the opening of rivers in the desert; and that the agency of the Spirit is not confined, in the New Testament, to gifts and miraculous powers, and their effects in producing mere intellectual conviction of the truth of Christianity, but is directed to the renovation of our nature, and the carrying into full practical effect the redeeming designs of the Gospel, is manifest from

numerous passages and arguments to be found in the discourses of Christ and the writings of his apostles. In our Lord's discourse with Nicodemus, he declares that the regenerate man is "born of the Spirit." He promises to send the Spirit "to convince (or reprove) the world of sin." It is by the Spirit that our Lord represents himself as carrying on the work of human salvation, after his return to heaven, and in this sense promises to abide with his disciples forever, and to be with them "to the end of the

world." In accordance with this, the apostles ascribe the success of heir preaching, in producing moral changes in the hearts of men, to the influence of the Spirit. So far from attributing this to the extraordinary gifts with which the Spirit had furnished them, St. Paul denies that this efficacy was to be ascribed either to himself or Apollos, though both were thus richly endowed; and he expressly attributes the "increase," which followed their planting and watering, to God. The Spirit is,

therefore, represented as giving life to the dead souls of men; the moral virtues are called "fruits of the Spirit;" and to be "led by the Spirit," is made the proof of our being the sons of God.

Such is the wondrous and deeply affecting doctrine of Scripture. The fruit of the death and intercession of Christ, is not only to render it consistent with a righteous government to forgive sin, but to call forth the active exorcise of the love of God to man. His "good Spirit," the

expressive appellation of the third person of the blessed trinity in the Old Testament, visits every heart, and connects his secret influences with outward means, to awaken the attention of man to spiritual and eternal things, and win his heart to God. (6)

(6) "Illius esse duritiem humani cordis emollire, cum aut per salutiferam prae-dicationem Evangelii, aut alia quacunque ratione in pectora hominum recipitur: ilium eos illuminare, et in

agnitionem Dei atque in omnem viam veritatis et in totius vitae novitatem, et perpetuam salutis spem perducere." (Bishop Jewel.)

To this operation, this "working of God in man," in conjunction with the written and preached word, and other means of religious instruction and excitement, is to be attributed that view of the spiritual nature of the law under which we are placed, and the extent of its demands, which produces conviction of the fact of sin, and at once annihilates all

self righteousness, and all palliations of offence; which withers the goodly show of supposititious virtues, and brings the convicted transgressor, whatever his character may be before men, and though, in comparison of many of his fellow creatures, he may have been much less sinful, to say before God, "Behold, I am vile, what shall I answer thee," The penalty of die law, death, eternal death, being at the same time apprehended, and meditated upon, the bondage of fear, and the painful anticipations of the

consequences of sin follow, and thus he is moved by a sense of danger, to look out for a remedy; and this being disclosed in the same revelation, and unfolded by the same Spirit, from whose secret influence he has received this unwonted tenderness of heart, this "broken and contrite spirit," he confesses his sins before God, and appears like the publican in the temple, smiting upon his breast, exclaiming, "God be merciful to me a sinner:" - thus at once acknowledging his own offence and unworthiness,

and flying for refuge to the mercy of his offended God proclaimed to him in Christ. That which every such convinced and awakened man needs is mercy, the remission of his sins, and consequent exemption from their penalty. It is only this which can take him from under the malediction of the general law which he has violated; only this which can bring him into a state of reconciliation and friendship with the Lawgiver, whose righteous displeasure he has provoked. This act of mercy

is, in the New Testament, called justification, and to the consideration of this doctrine we must now direct our attention.

On the nature of justification, its extent, and the mode in which it is attained, it is not necessary to say, that various opinions have been asserted and defended by theologians; but before we advert to any of them, our care shall be to adduce the natural and unperverted doctrine of Scripture on a subject which it is of so much importance to

apprehend clearly, in that light in which it is there presented.

The first point which we find established by the language of the New Testament is, that justification, the pardon and remission of sins, the non-imputation of sin, and the imputation of righteousness, are terms and phrases of the same import. The following passages may be given in proof:-

Luke 18:13, 14, "I tell you, this man went down to his

house justified, rather than the other."

Here the term "justified" must mean pardoned, since the publican confessed himself "a sinner,"

and asked “mercy" in that relation.

Acts 13:38, 39, "Be it known unto you, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by him, all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Here, also, it is

plain that forgiveness of sins and justification mean the same thing, one term being used as explanatory of the other.

Romans 3:25, 26, "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." To remit sins and to justify are

here also represented as the same act; consequent upon a declaration of the righteousness of God, and upon our faith.

Rom. 4:4-8, "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness; even as David describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed is the man whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed is

the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." The quotation from David, introduced by the apostle, by way of illustrating his doctrine of the justification of the ungodly, by "counting his faith for righteousness," clearly, that he considered "justification," "the imputing of righteous, ness," "the forgiveness of iniquities," the

"covering of sin," the "non-imputation of sin," as of the same import; acts substantially equivalent one to another, though

under somewhat different views, and therefore expressed by terms respectively convertible;- this variety of phrase being adopted, probably, to preserve the idea which runs throughout the whole Scripture, that in the remission or pardon of sin, Almighty God acts in his character of Ruler and Judge, showing mercy upon terms satisfactory to his justice, when he might in rigid justice have punished our transgressions to the utmost. The term justification especially is

judiciary, and taken from courts of law and the proceedings of magistrates; and this judiciary character of the act of pardon is also confirmed by the relation of the parties to each other, as it is constantly exhibited in Scripture. God is an offended Sovereign; man is an offending subject. He has offended against public law, not against private obligations; and the act therefore by which he is relieved from the penalty, must be magisterial and regal. It is, also, a farther confirmation that in this process Christ is

represented as a public Mediator and Advocate,

The importance of acquiring and maintaining this simple and distinct view of justification, that it is the remission of sins, as stated in the passages above quoted, will appear from the following considerations:-

1. We are taught that pardon of sin is not an act of prerogative, done above law; but a judicial process, done consistently with law. For in this process there are three parties. God, as Sovereign; "Who shall lay

any thing to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? "Christ, as Advocate; not defending the guilty, but interceding for them; "It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us," Rom. 8:33, 34. "And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father," 1 John 2:1. The third party is man, who is, by his own confession, "guilty," "a sinner,"

"ungodly;" for repentance in all cases precedes this remission of sins, and it both supposes and confesses offence and desert of punishment. God is Judge in this process, not, however, as it has been well expressed "by the law of creation, and of works, but by the law of redemption and grace. Not as merely just, though just; but as merciful. Not as merciful in general, and ex nuda voluntate, without any respect had to satisfaction; but as propitiated by the blood of Christ, and having accepted

the propitiation made by his blood. Not merely propitiated by his blood, but moved by his intercession, which he makes as our Advocate in heaven; not only pleading the propitiation made and accepted, but the repentance and faith of the sinner, and the promise of the Judge before whom he pleads." (Lawson's Theo-politica.) Thus as pardon or justification does not take place but upon propitiation, the mediation and intercession of a third party, and on the condition on the part of the guilty,

not only of repentance, but of "faith" in Christ's "blood,"

which, as before established, means faith in his sacrificial death, it is not an act of mere mercy, or of prerogative; but one which consists with a righteous government, and proceeds on grounds which secure the honors of the Divine justice.

2. We are thus taught that justification has respect to particular individuals, and is to be distinguished from "that gracious constitution of God, by which, for the

sake of Jesus Christ, he so far delivers all mankind from the guilt of Adam's sin, as to place them, notwithstanding their natural connection with the fallen progenitor of the human race, in a salvable state. Justification is a blessing of a much higher and more perfect character, and is not common to the human race at large, but experienced by a certain description of persons in particular." (Bunting's Sermon on Justification.) Thus some of our older divines properly distinguish between

sententia legis and sententia judicis, that is, between legislation and judgment; between the constitution, whatever it may be, under which the sovereign decides, whether it be rigidly just or softened by mercy, and his decisions in his regal and judicial capacity them-selves. Justification is, therefore, a decision under a gracious legislation, "the law of faith;" but not this legislation itself. "For if it be an act of legislation, it is then only promise, and that looks toward none in particular; but to all to

whom the promise is made, in general, and presupposeth a condition to be performed. But justification presupposeth a particular person, a particular cause, a condition performed, and the performance, as already past, pleaded; and the decision proceeds accordingly." (Lawson's Theo-politica.)

Justification becomes, there-fore, a subject of personal concern, personal prayer, and personal seeking, and is to be personally experienced; nor can any one be safe in

trusting to that general gracious constitution under which he is placed by the mercy of God in Christ, since that is established in order to the personal and particular justification of those who believe, but must not be confounded with it.

3. Justification, being a sentence of pardon, the Antinomian notion of eternal justification becomes a manifest absurdity. For if it be a sentence, a decision on the case of the offender, it must take place in time; for

that is not a sentence which is conceived in the breast of the Judge, A sentence is pronounced, and a sentence pronounced and declared from eternity, before man was created, when no sin had been committed, no law published, no Savior promised, no faith exercised, when, in a word, no being existed but God himself, is not only absurd, but impossible, for it would have been a decision declared to none, and therefore not declared at all: and if, as they say, the sentence was passed in

eternity, but manifested in time, it might from thence be as rightly argued that the world was created from eternity, and that the work of creation in the beginning of time, was only a manifestation of that which was from everlasting. It is the guilty who are pardoned- "he justifieth the ungodly;" guilt, therefore, precedes pardon: while that remains, so far are any from being justified, that they are "under wrath," in a state of "condemnation," with which a state of

justification cannot consist, for the contradiction is palpable; so that the advocates of this wild notion must either give up justification in eternity, or a state of condemnation in time. If they hold the former, they contradict common sense; if they deny the latter, they deny the Scriptures.

4. Justification, being the pardon of sin, this view of the doctrine guards us against the notion, that it is an act of God by which we are made actually just and righteous. "This is

sanctification, which is, indeed, the immediate fruit of justification; but, nevertheless, is a distinct gift of God, and of a totally different nature. The one implies what God does for us through his Son; the other, what God works in us by his Spirit. So that, although some rare instances may be found, wherein the terms justified and justification are used in so wide a sense as to include sanctification also, yet in general use they are sufficiently distinguished from each other both by St. Paul and the other inspired

writers." (Wesley's Sermons.) 5. Justification, being the pardon of sin by judicial sentence of the offended Majesty of heaven, under a gracious constitution, the term affords no ground for the notion, that it imports the imputation or ac-counting to us the active and passive righteousness of Christ, so as to make us both relatively and positively righteous.

On this subject, which has been fruitful of controversy, our remarks

must be somewhat more extended.

The notion, that justification includes not only the pardon of sin, but the imputation to us of Christ's active personal righteousness, though usually held only by Calvinists, has not been received by all divines of this class; but, on the contrary, by some of them, both in ancient and modern times, it has been very strenuously opposed, as well as by the advocates of that more moderate scheme of election

defended by Camero in France, and by Baxter in England. Even Calvin himself has said nothing on this subject, but which Arminius, in his Declaration before the States of Holland, declares his readiness to subscribe to; and Mr. Wesley, in much the same view of the subject as Arminius, admits the doctrine of the imputation of the righteousness of Christ to us upon our believing, provided it be soberly interpreted.

There are, in fact, three opinions on this subject, which it is necessary to distinguish in order to obtain clear views of the controversy.

The first is a part of the high Calvinistic scheme, and lays at the foundation of Antinomianism, and is, in consequence, violently advocated by those who adopt that gross corruption of Christian faith. It is, that Christ so represented the elect that his righteousness is imputed to us as ours; as if we ourselves had been what he was, that is,

perfectly obedient to the law of God, and had done what he did as perfectly righteous.

The first objection to this opinion is, that it is nowhere stated in Scripture that Christ's personal righteousness is imputed to us. Not a text can be found which contains any enunciation of this doctrine; and those which are adduced, such as "the Lord our righteousness," and "Christ, who is made unto us righteousness," are obviously pressed into the

service of this scheme by a paraphrastic interpretation, for which there is no authority in any other passages which speak of our redemption. But to these texts we shall return in the sequel.

2. The notion here attached to Christ's representing us is wholly gratuitous. In a limited sense it is true, that Christ represented us; that is, suffered in our stead, that we might not suffer; "but not absolutely as our delegate," says Baxter, justly; "our persons did not, in a law sense, do in

and by Christ what he did, or possess the habits which he possessed, or suffer what he suffered."

(Gospel Defended.) The Scripture doctrine is, indeed, just the contrary. It is never said, that we suffered in Christ, but that he suffered for us; so also it is never taught that we obeyed in Christ, but that, through his entire obedience to a course of subjection and suffering, ending in his death, our disobedience is forgiven.

3. Nor is there any weight in the argument, that as

our sins were accounted his, so his righteousness is accounted ours. Our sins were never so accounted Christ's as that he did them, and so justly suffered for them. This is a monstrous notion, which has been sometimes pushed to the verge of blasphemy. Our transgressions are never said to have been imputed to him in the fact, but only that they were laid upon him in the penalty, To be God's "beloved Son in whom he was always well pleased," and to be reckoned, imputed,

accounted a sinner, de facto, are manifest contradictions.

4. This whole doctrine of the imputation of Christ's personal moral obedience to believers, as their own personal moral obedience, involves & fiction and impossibility inconsistent with the Divine attributes. "The judgment of the all-wise God is always according to truth; neither can it ever consist with his unerring wisdom to think that I am innocent, to judge that I am righteous or holy, because another is

so. He can no more confound me with Christ than with David or Abraham." (Wesley.) But a contradiction is involved in another view. If what our Lord was and did is to be accounted to us in the sense just given, then we must be accounted never to have sinned, because Christ never sinned, and yet we must ask for pardon, though we are accounted from birth to death, to have fulfilled God's law in Christ; or if they should say, that when we ask for pardon we ask only for a revelation to us of our

eternal justification or pardon, the matter is not altered, for what need is there of pardon, in time or eternity, if we are accounted to have perfectly obeyed God's holy law; and why should we be accounted also to have suffered, in Christ, the penalty of sins which we are ac-counted never to have committed?

5. Another objection to the accounting of Christ's personal acts as done by us is, that they were of a loftier character than can be supposed capable of

being accounted the acts of mere creatures; that, in one eminent instance, neither the act could be required of us, nor the imputation of the act to us; and, in other respects, and as to particular duties, Christ's personal obedience is deficient, and cannot be therefore reckoned to our account. For the first, Christ was God and man united in one person, a circumstance which gave a peculiar character of fullness and perfection to his obedience, which not even man, in his state of innocence, can be

supposed capable of rendering, "He, then, that assumeth this righteousness to himself," says Goodwin, "and apparelleth himself with it, represents himself before God, not in the habit of a just or righteous man, but in the glorious attire of the great Mediator of the world, whose righteousness hath heights and depths in it, a length and breadth which infinitely exceed the proportions of all men whatever. Now, then, for a silly worm to take this robe of immeasurable majesty upon him, and to conceit

himself as great in holiness and righteousness as Jesus Christ, (for that is the spirit that rules in this opinion, to teach men to assume all that Christ did unto themselves, and that in no other way, nor upon any lower terms, than as if themselves had personally done it,) whether this be right, I leave to sober men to consider." (Treatise on Justification.) For the second, I refer to our Lord's baptism by John. His submission to this ordinance was a part of his personal righteousness, and it is strongly marked as

such in his own words addressed to John, "Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." But no man now is bound to submit to the baptism of John, and the righteousness of doing so, whether personally or by imputation, is superfluous. This may also be applied to many other of the acts of Christ; they were never obligatory upon us, and their imputation to us is impossible or unnecessary. For the third case, the personal obedience of Christ is, as to particular acts, deficient,

and our condition could not, therefore, be provided for by this imputation. Suppose us guilty of violating the paternal or the conjugal duties, the duties of servants, or of magistrates, with many others, this theory is, that we are justified by the imputation of Christ's personal acts of righteousness to us, and that they are reckoned to us, as though we had ourselves performed them. But our Lord, never having stood in any of these relations, never acquired a personal righteousness of

this kind to be reckoned as done by us. That which never was done by Christ cannot be imputed, and so it would follow that we can never be forgiven such delinquencies. If it be said, that the imputation of particular acts is not necessary, but that it is sufficient if men have a righteousness imputed to them, which is equivalent to them, it is answered, the strict and peremptory nature of law knows nothing of this doctrine of the equivalency of one act to another. The suffering of an unobliged substitute,

where such a provision is admitted, may be an equivalent to the suffering of the offender; but one course of duties cannot be accepted in the place of another when justification is placed on the ground of the actual fulfillment of the law by a delegate in the place of the delinquent, which is the ground on which the doctrine of the imputation of Christ's active righteousness for justification places it. The law must exact conformity to all its precepts in their place and order, and he

that "offends in one is guilty of all."

6. A crowning and most fatal objection is, that this doctrine shifts the meritorious cause of man's justification from Christ's "obedience unto death," where the Scriptures place it, to Christ's active obedience to the precepts of the law; and leaves no rational account of the reason of Christ's vicarious sufferings. To his "blood" the New Testament writers ascribe our redemption, and

"faith in his blood" is as clearly held out as the instrumental cause of our justification; but by this doctrine the attention and hope of men are perversely turned away from his sacrificial death to his holy life, which, though necessary, both as an example to us, and also so to qualify his sacrifice, that his blood should be that of "a lamb without spot," is nowhere represented as that on account of which men are pardoned.

Piscator, though a Calvinist, thus treats the

subject in scholastic form. "If our sins have been expiated by the obedience of the life of Christ, either a perfect expiation has been thus made for all of them, or an imperfect one for some of them. The first cannot be asserted, for then it would follow that Christ had died in vain; for as he died to expiate our sins, he would not have accounted it necessary to offer such an expiation for them, if they had been already expiated by the obedience of his life. And the latter cannot be maintained, because Christ

has yielded perfect obedience to the law of God, wherefore, if he have per-formed that for the expiation of our sins, he must necessarily, through that obedience, have expiated all of them perfectly." Again, "If Christ, by the obedience of his life, had rendered satisfaction to God for our sins, it would follow, as "a consequence, that God is unjust, who has made an additional demand to receive satisfaction through the obedience of death, and thus required to have the same debt paid twice."

Again, "If Christ, by his obedience to the law, has merited for us the forgiveness of sins, the consequence will be, that the remission of sins was effected without the shedding of blood; but without shedding of blood no remission is effected, as appears from Heb. 11:22; therefore Christ has not merited for us the remission of sins by the obedience which he performed to the law." (7) To the same effect, also, is a passage in Goodwin's Treatise on Justification, written while he was yet a

Calvinist. "If men be as righteous as Christ was in his life, there was no more necessity of his death for them, than there was either of his own death, or the death of any other, for himself. If we were perfectly just or righteous in him, or with him, in his life, then the just would not have died for the unjust, but he would have died for the just, for whom there was no necessity he should die. This reason the apostle expressly delivers, Gal. 2:21, 'If righteousness be by the law, then Christ died in vain.' I desire the

impartial reader to observe narrowly the force of this inference made by the Holy Ghost. If righteousness, or justification, be by the law, then Christ died in vain. Men cannot here betake themselves to their wonted refuge, to say, that by the law, is to be understood the works of the law as performed by a man's self in person. For if by the word law in this place, we understand the works of the law as performed by Christ, the consequence will rise up with the greater strength against them. If righteousness were by the

works of the law, as performed by Christ, that is, if the imputation of them were our complete righteousness, the death of Christ for us had been in vain, because the righteousness of his life imputed, had been a sufficient and complete righteousness for us,"

(7) See note in Nichol's translation of the works of Arminius, vol. i, p. 634, The same writer, also, powerfully argues against the same doctrine from its confounding the two covenants of works and

grace. "It is true, many that hold the way of imputation are nothing ashamed of this consequent, the confounding the two covenants of God with men, that of works with that of grace. These conceive that God never made more covenants than one with man; and that the Gospel is nothing else but a gracious aid from God to help man to perform the covenant of works: so that the life and salvation which are said to come by Christ, in no other sense come by him, but as he fulfilled that law of works for man which

men themselves were not able to fulfill: and by imputation, as by a deed of gift, he makes over his perfect obedience and fulfilling of the law to those that believe; so that they, in right of this perfect obedience, made theirs by imputation, come to inherit life and salvation, according to the strict tenor of the covenant of works-' Do this and live.'

"But men may as well say, there was no second Adam, really differing from the first; or that the spirit of bondage is the same with

the Spirit of adoption. If the second covenant of grace were implicitly contained in the first, then the meaning of the first covenant, conceived in those words,

'Do this and live,' must be, do this, either by thyself, or by another, and live. There is no other way to reduce them to the same covenant.

"Again, if the first and second covenant were in substance the same, then must the conditions in both be the same. For the conditions in a covenant are as essential a part of it

as any other belonging to it. Though there be the same parties covenanting, and the same things covenanted for; yet if there be new articles of agreement, it is really another covenant. Now if the conditions be the same in both those covenants, then to do this, and to believe, faith and works, are the same; whereas the Scripture, from place to place, makes the most irreconcilable opposition between them. But some, being shy of this consequence, hold the imputation of Christ's

righteousness (in the sense opposed) and yet demur upon an identity of the two covenants.

Wherefore, to prove it, I thus reason: Where the parties covenanting are the same, and the things covenanted for the same, and the conditions the same, there the covenants are the same. But if the righteousness of the law imputed to us, be the condition of the new covenant, all the three, persons, things, conditions, are the same. Therefore the two covenants, first and

second, the old and the new, are the same; because as to the par. ties covenanting, and the things covenanted for, it is agreed, on both sides, they are the same.

"If it be objected, that the righteousness of the law imputed from another, and wrought by a man's self, are two different conditions; and that, therefore, it doth not follow, that the covenants are the same: to this I answer, the substance of the agreement will be found the same

notwithstanding; the works, or righteousness of the law are the same, by whomsoever wrought.

If Adam had fulfilled the law, as Christ did, he had been justified by the same righteousness, wherewith Christ him-self was righteous. If it be said, that imputation in the second covenant, which was not in the first, makes a difference in the condition; I answer, 1. Imputation of works, or of righteousness, is not the condition of the new covenant, but believing. If imputation

were the condition, then the whole covenant would, lie upon God, and nothing be required on the creature's part; for imputation is an act of God, not of men. 2, If it were granted, that the righteousness, or the works of the law imputed from Christ, were that whereby we are justified, yet they must justify, not as imputed, but as righteousness; or works of the law. Therefore imputation makes no difference in this respect. Imputation can be no part of that righteousness by

which we are justified, because it is no conformity with any law, nor with any part or branch of any law, that man was ever bound to keep. Therefore it can be no part of that righteousness by which he is justified. So that the condition of both covenants will be found the same, (and consequently both covenants the same,) if justification be maintained by the righteousness of Christ imputed."

To the work last quoted the reader may be referred as a

complete treatise on the subject, and a most masterly refutation of a notion, which he and other Calvinistic divines, in different ages, could not fail to perceive was most delusive to the souls of men, directly destructive of moral obedience, and not less so of the Christian doctrine of the atonement of Christ, and justification by "faith in his blood." It is on his ground that men who turn the grace of God into licentiousness, contend, that being invested with the perfect righteousness of Christ,

God cannot see any sin in them; and, indeed, upon their own principles, they reason conclusively. Justice has not to do with them, but with Christ; it demands perfect obedience, and Christ has rendered that perfect obedience for them, and what he did is always accounted as done by them. They are, therefore, under no real obligation of obedience; they can fear no penal consequences from disobedience; and a course of the most flagrant vice, may consist with an entire confidence in the indefeasible favor of God,

with the profession of sonship and discipleship, and the hope of heaven. These notions many shamelessly avow; and they have been too much encouraged in their fatal creed, by those who have held the same system substantially, though they abhor the bold conclusions which the open Antinomian would draw from it.

The doctrine, on which the above remarks have been made, is the first of the three opinions which have been held on the subject of

the imputation of righteousness in our justification. The second is the opinion of Calvin himself, and those of his followers, who have not refined so much upon the scheme of their master as others, and with them many Arminians have also, in some respects, agreed; not that they have approved the terms in which this opinion is usually expressed; but because they have thought it, under a certain interpretation, right, and one which would allow them, for the sake of peace,

to use either the phrase, "the imputation of the righteousness of Christ," or "the imputation of faith for righteousness," which latter they consider more Scriptural, and therefore interpret the former so as to be consistent with it.

The sentiments of Calvin on this subject may be collected from the following passages in the third book of his Institutes:-

"We simply explain justification to be an acceptance, by which God receives us into his favor

and esteems us as righteous persons, and we say it consists in the remission of sins and the imputation of the righteousness of Christ." "He must certainly be destitute of a righteousness of his own, who is taught to seek it out of himself. This is most clearly asserted by the apostle when he says,' He hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.' We see that our righteousness is not in ourselves but in Christ. ' As by one man's disobedience

many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.' What is placing our righteousness in the obedience of Christ, but asserting that we are accounted righteous only because his obedience is accepted for us as if it were our own?"

In these passages, the wording of which seems at first sight to favor the opinion above refuted, there is, however, this marked difference, that there is no separation made between the active

and passive righteousness of Christ, his obedience to the precepts of the moral law, and his obedience to its penalty; so that one is imputed in our justification for one purpose, and the other for another; one to take the place of our obligation to obey, the other of our obligation to suffer; but the obedience of Christ is considered as me, as his holy life and sacrificial death considered together, and forming that righteousness of Christ which, being imputed to us, we are "reputed righteous before God, and not of

ourselves." This is farther confirmed by the strenuous manner in which Calvin proves, that justification is simply the remission, or non-imputation of sin,

"Whom, therefore, the Lord receives into fellowship with him, him he is said to justify, because he cannot receive any one into fellowship with himself without making him from a sinner to be a righteous person. This is accomplished by the remission of sins. For if they whom the Lord hath reconciled to himself be

judged according to their works, they will still be found actually sinners, who, notwithstanding, must be absolved and free from sin. It appears, then, that those whom God receives, are made righteous no otherwise than as they are purified by being cleansed from all their defilements by the remission of sins; so that such a righteousness may, in one word, be denominated a remission of sins. Both these points are fully established by the language of Paul, which I have already cited. 'God

was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed to us the word of reconciliation.' Then he adds,'

He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.' The terms righteousness and reconciliation are here used by St. Paul indiscriminately, to teach us that they are mutually comprehended in each other. And he states the

manner of obtaining this righteousness to consist in our transgressions not being imputed to us; wherefore we can no longer doubt how God justifies, when we hear that he reconciles us to himself by not imputing our sins to us." "So Paul, in preaching at Antioch, says,' Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by him all that believe are justified.' The apostle thus connects 'forgiveness of sins' with 'justification,' to show that the) are identically the same." (Institutes, lib. 3, cap. xi.)

This simple notion of justification as the remission of sins could not have been maintained by Calvin had he held the notion of a distinct imputation of Christ's active righteousness; for it has always followed from that notion, that they who have held it represent justification as consisting of two parts, first, the forgiveness of sins, and then the imputation of Christ's moral obedience, so that he who is forgiven may be considered personally righteous, and

thus, when both meet, he is justified. (8)

(8) "To be released from the damnatory sentence is one thing, to be treated as a righteous pawn, is evidently another." (Hervey's Theron and Aspasio.)

The view taken by Calvin of the imputation of Christ's righteousness in justification, is obviously, that the righteousness of Christ, that is, his entire obedience to the will of his Father both in doing and suffering, is, as he says, "accepted for us, as though

it were our own;" so that, in virtue of it upon our believing, we are accounted righteous, not personally, but by the remission, or non-imputation of our sins. Thus, he observes on Acts 13:38, 39, "The justification which we have by Christ in the Gospel, is not a justification with righteousness, properly so called, but a justification from sin, and from the guilt of sin and condemnation due to it. So when Christ said to men and women in the Gospel, 'Thy sins are forgiven thee,' then he justified them-the

forgiveness of their sins was their justification."

Calvin, however, like many of his followers, who adopt no views on this subject substantially different from their master, uses figurative terms and phrases, which somewhat obscure his real meaning, and give much countenance to the Antinomian doctrine; but then, so little, it has been thought, can be objected to the opinion of Calvin, in the article of imputed righteousness, in the main, that many divines, opposed

to the Calvinian theory generally, have not hesitated, in sub-stance, to assent to it, reserving to themselves some liberty in the use of the terms in which it is often enveloped, either to modify, explain, or reject them.

Thus Arminius:- "I believe that sinners are accounted righteous solely by the obedience of Christ; and that the righteousness of Christ is the only meritorious cause on account of which God pardons the sins of believers, and reckons

them as righteous as if they had perfectly fulfilled the law. But since God imputes the righteousness of Christ to none except believers, I conclude, that, in this sense, it may be well and properly said, to a man who believes, faith is imputed for righteousness, through grace, because God hath set forth his Son Jesus Christ to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood. Whatever interpretation may be put upon these expressions, none of our divines blame Calvin, or consider him to be heterodox on this point;

yet my opinion is not so widely different from his, as to prevent me employing the signature of my own hand in subscribing to those things which he has delivered on this subject, in the third book of his Institutes." (Nicholl's Arminius.)

So also Mr. Wesley, in his sermon, entitled. "The Lord our Righteousness," almost repeats Arminius's words; but though these eminent divines seem to agree substantially with Calvin, it is clear that, in their interpretation of the

phrase, the "imputed righteousness of Christ," he would not entirely follow them. "As the active and passive righteousness of Christ were never in fact separated from each other, so we never need separate them at all. It is with regard to both these conjointly, that Jesus is called ' the Lord our righteousness.' But when is this righteousness imputed? When they believe. In that very hour the righteousness of Christ is theirs. It is imputed to every one that believes, as soon as he believes. But in

what sense is this righteousness imputed to believers? In this; all believers are forgiven and accepted, not for the sake of any thing in them, or of any thing that ever was, that is, or ever can be done by them, but wholly for the sake of what Christ hath done and suffered for them. But perhaps some will affirm, that faith is imputed to us for righteousness, St. Paul affirms this, therefore I affirm it too. Faith is imputed for righteousness to every believer, namely, faith in the righteousness

of Christ; but this is exactly the same thing which has been said before; for by that expression I mean neither more nor less than that we are justified by faith, not by works, or that every believer is forgiven and accepted, merely for the sake of what Christ had done and suffered." (Sermons.) In this sermon, which is one of peace, one in which he shows how near he was willing to approach those who held the doctrine of Calvin on this subject, the author justly observes, that the terms themselves, in which

it is often expressed, are liable to abuse, and intimates, that they had better be dispensed with. This every one must feel; for it is clear that such figurative expressions, as being clothed with the righteousness of Christ, and appearing before God as invested in it, so that no fault can be laid to our charge, are modes of speech, which, though used by Calvin and his followers of the moderate school, and by some evangelical Arminians, who mainly agree with them on the subject of man's

justification, are much more appropriate to the doctrine of the imputation of Christ's active righteousness, as held by the higher Calvinists, and by Antinomians, than to any other. The truth of the case is, that the imputation of Christ's righteousness is held by such Calvinists in a proper sense, by evangelical Arminians in an improper or accommodated sense; and that Calvin and his real followers, though nearer to the latter than the former, do not fully agree with either. If the same phrases,

therefore, be used, they are certainly understood in different senses, or, by one party at least, with limitations; and if it can be shown, that neither is the "imputation of Christ's righteousness," in any good sense expressed or implied in Scripture, and that the phrases, being clothed and invested with his righteousness, are not used with any reference to justification, it seems preferable, at least when we are investigating truth, to discard them at once, and folly to bring out the

testimony of Scripture on the doctrine of imputation,

The question then will be, not whether the imputation of Christ's righteousness is to be taken in the sense of the Antinomians, which has been sufficiently refuted; but whether there is any Scripture authority for the imputation of Christ's righteousness as it is understood by Calvin, and admitted, though with some hesitancy, and with explanations, by Arminius and some others.

With Calvin the notion of imputation seems to be

that the righteousness of Christ, that is, his entire obedience to the will of his Father, both in doing and suffering, is, upon our believing, imputed, or accounted to us, or accepted for us, "as though it were our own," From which we may conclude, that he admitted some kind of transfer of the righteous, ness of Christ to our account, and that believers are considered so to be in Christ, as that he should answer for them in law, and plead his righteousness in default of theirs. All this, we grant, is

capable of being interpreted to a good and Scriptural sense; but it is also capable of a contrary one. The opinion of some professedly Calvinistic divines; of Baxter and his followers; and of the majority of evangelical Arminians, is, as Baxter well expresses it, that Christ's righteousness is imputed to us in the sense of its being accounted of God the valuable consideration, satisfaction, and merit, (attaining God's ends,) for which we are (when we consent to the covenant of grace) forgiven

and justified, against the condemning sentence of the law of innocence, and accounted and accepted of God to grace and glory." (Breviate of Controversies.) So also Goodwin: "If we take the phrase of imputing Christ's righteousness improperly, viz. for the bestowing, as it were, of the righteous, ness of Christ, including his obedience, as well passive as active, in the return of it, i.e. in the privileges, blessings, and benefits purchased by it, so a believer may be said to be justified by the righteousness of Christ

imputed. But then the meaning can be no more than this: God justifies a believer for the sake of Christ's righteousness, and not for any righteousness of his own. Such an imputation of the righteousness of Christ as this, is no way denied or questioned." (On Justification.)

Between these opinions, as to the imputation of the righteousness of Christ it will be seen, that there is a manifest difference, which difference arises from the different senses in which

the term imputation is taken. The latter takes it in the sense of accounting or allowing to the believer the benefit of the righteousness of Christ, the other in the sense of reckoning or accounting the righteousness of Christ as ours; that is, what he did and suffered is regarded as done and suffered by us. "It is accepted," says Calvin," as though it were our own;" so that though Calvin does not divide the active and passive obedience of Christ, nor make justification any thing more than the remission of

sin, yet his opinion easily slides into the Antinomian notion, and lays itself open to several of the same objections, and especially to this, that it involves the same kind of fiction, that what Christ did or suffered, is, in any sense whatever, considered by him who knows all things as they are, as being done or suffered by any other person, than by him who did or suffered it in fact.

For this notion, that the righteousness of Christ is so imputed as to be accounted our own, there is

no warrant in the word of God; and a slight examination of those passages, which are indifferently adduced to support either the Antinomian or the Calvinistic view of the subject, will suffice to demonstrate this.

Psalm 32:1: "Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered." The covering of sin here spoken of, is by some considered to be the investment of the sinner with the righteousness or obedience, of Christ. But

this is entirely gratuitous, for the forgiveness of sin, even by the legal atonements, is called, according to the Hebrew idiom, (though another verb is used,) to cover sin; and the latter part of the sentence is clearly a parallelism to the former. This is the interpretation of Luther and of Calvin himself. To forgive sin, to cover sin, and not to impute sin, are in this psalm all phrases obviously of the same import, and no other kind of imputation but the non-imputation of sin is mentioned in it. And,

indeed, the passage will not serve the purpose of the advocates of the doctrine of the imputation of Christ's active righteousness, on their own principles; for sin cannot be covered by the imputation of Christ's active righteousness, since they hold that it is taken away by the imputation of his death, and that the office of Christ's active righteousness is not to take away sin; but to render us personally and positively holy by imputation and the fiction of a transfer.

Jer. 23:6, and 33:16: "And this is the name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness." This passage also proves nothing to the point, for it is neither said that the righteousness of the Lord shall be our righteousness, nor that it shall be imputed to us for righteousness, but simply, that the name by which he shall be called, or acknowledged, shall be the Lord our Righteousness, that is, the Author and Procurer of our righteousness or justification before God. So he is said to be "the

Resurrection," "our Life," "our Peace," &c, as the author of these blessings; for who ever dreamt that Christ is the life, the resurrection, the peace of his people by imputation? or that we live by being accounted to live in him, or are raised from the dead by being accounted to have risen in him?

"Some," says Goodwin, "have digged for the treasure of imputation in Isaiah 45:24,' Surely shall one say, in the Lord have I righteous-ness and strength.' But, first, neither

is there here the least breathing of that imputation so much wandered after, nor do I find any intimation given of any such business by any sound expositor. Secondly, the plain and direct meaning of the place is, that when God should communicate the knowledge of himself, in his Son, to the world, his people should have this sense of the means of their salvation and peace, that they receive them of the free grace of God, and not of themselves, or by the merit of their own

righteousness. And Calvin's exposition is to this effect:- ' Because righteousness and strength are the two main points of our salvation, the faithful acknowledge God to be the author of both.'"

With respect to all those passages which speak of the Jewish or Christian Churches, or their individual members being "clothed with garments of salvation," "robes of righteousness," "white linen, the righteousness of the saints," or of "putting on Christ;" a class of texts

on which, from their mere sound, the advocates of imputed righteousness ring so many changes, the use which is thus made of them shows either great inattention to the context, or great ignorance of the principles of criticism:- the former, because the context will show that either those passages relate to temporal deliverances, and external blessings; or else, not to justification, but to habitual and practical sanctification, and to the honors and rewards of the saints in glory:- the latter, because nothing is more

common in language than to represent good or evil habits by clean or filthy, by soiled or resplendent vestments, by nakedness or by clothing; and this is especially the case in the Hebrew language, because it was the custom of the Jews, by changing their garments to express the changes in their condition. They put on sackcloth, or laid aside their upper robe, (which is, in Scripture style, called making themselves naked,) or rent their garments, when personal or national afflictions came upon

them; and they arrayed themselves in white and adorned apparel, in seasons of festivity, and after great deliverances. In all these figurative expressions there is, however, nothing which countenances the notion that Christ's righteousness is a robe thrown upon sinful men, to hide from the eye of justice their natural squalidness and pollution, and to give them confidence in the presence of God. No interpretation can be more fanciful and unfounded.

Romans 3:21, 22, "But now the righteousness of God, without the law, is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets, even the righteousness of God which is by the faith of Jesus Christ." The righteousness of God here is, by some, taken to signify the righteous, ness of Christ imputed to them that believe. But the very text makes it evident, that by "the righteousness of God," the righteousness of the Father is meant, for he is distinguished from

"Jesus Christ," mentioned immediately afterward; and by the righteousness of God, it is also plain, that his rectoral justice in the administration of pardon, is meant, which, of course, is not thought capable of imputation. This is made indubitable by the verse which follows, "to declare at this time his righteousness, that he might be just and the justifier of him that believeth on Jesus."

The phrase, the righteousness of God, in this and several other

passages in St. Paul's writings, obviously means God's righteous method of justifying sinners through the atonement of Christ, and instrumentally, by faith. This is the grand peculiarity of the Gospel scheme, the fullness at once of its love and its wisdom, that "the righteousness of God, is manifested without law;" and that without either an enforcement of the penalty of the violated law upon the personal offender; which would have cut him off from hope; or without making his justification to

depend upon works of obedience to the law, (which was the only method of justification admitted by the Jews of St. Paul's day,) and which obedience was impossible, and therefore hopeless; he can yet, in perfect consistency with his justice and righteous administration, offer pardon to the guilty. No wonder, therefore, that the apostle, who discourses professedly on this subject, should lay so great a stress upon it, and that his mind, always full of a subject so great and glorious, should

so often advert to it incidentally, as well as in his regular discourses on the justification of man in the sight of God. Thus he gives it as a reason why he was not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, that "therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, the just shall live by faith," Rom. 1:17. Thus, again, in contrasting God's method of justifying the ungodly with the error of the Jews, by whom justification was held to be the acquittal of the righteous or obedient,

he says, "for they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God," Rom. 10:3.

The same contrast we have in Phil. 3:9, "Not having mine own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Jesus Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith" In all these passages the righteousness of God manifestly signifies, his righteous method of

justifying them that believe in Christ. No reference at all is made to the imputation of Christ's righteousness to such persons, and much less is any distinction set up between his active and passive righteousness.

1 Cor. 1:30, "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption." Here, also, to say that Christ is "made unto us righteousness," by imputation, is to invent and not to interpret. This is

clear, that he is made unto us righteousness only as he is made unto us "redemption," so that if we are not redeemed by imputation, we are not justified by imputation. The meaning of the apostle is, that Christ is made to us, by the appointment of God, the sole means of instruction, justification, sanctification, and eternal life.

2 Cor. 5:21, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in

him." To be made sin, we have already shown, signifies to be made an offering for sin; consequently, as no imputation of our sins to Christ is here mentioned, there is no foundation for the notion, that there is a reciprocal imputation of Christ's righteousness to us.

The text is wholly silent on this subject, for it is wholly gratuitous to say, that we are made the righteousness of God in or through Christ, by imputation or reckoning to us what he did

or suffered, as our acts or sufferings. The passages we have already adduced will explain the phrase, "the righteousness of God" in this place. This righteousness, with respect to our pardon, is God's righteous method of justifying, through the atonement of Christ, and our being made or becoming this righteousness of God in or by Christ, is our becoming righteous persons through the pardon of our sins in this peculiar method, by renouncing our own righteousness, and by

"submitting to this righteousness of God."

Rom. 5:18,19, "As by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's dis. obedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." That this passage, though generally depended upon in this controversy, as the most decisive in its evidence in favor of the

doctrine of imputation, proves nothing to the purpose may be thus demonstrated. It proves nothing in favor of the imputation of Christ's active righteousness. For,

1. Here is nothing said of the active obedience of Christ, as distinguished from his obedient suffering, and which might lead us to attribute the free gift of justification to the former, rather than to the latter.

2. If the apostle is supposed to speak here of the active obedience of

Christ, as distinguished from his sufferings, his death is of course excluded from the work of justification. But this cannot be allowed, because the apostle has intimated, in the same chapter, that we are "justified by his blood," Rom. 5:9, and, therefore it cannot be allowed that he is speaking of the active obedience of Christ, as distinguished from his passive.

3. As the apostle has unequivocally decided, that we are justified by the blood of Christ, or, in other

words, "that we are justified through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth a propitiation, through faith in his blood," (a thing which the doctrine under examination supposes to be impossible,) there is reason to conclude that he speaks here of his passive, rather than of his active obedience. "If, indeed, his willingness to suffer for our sins were never spoken of as an act of obedience, such an observation might have the appearance of a mere expedient to get rid of a

difficulty. But if, on the other hand, this should prove to be the very spirit and letter of Scripture, the justness of it will be obvious. Hear, then, our Lord himself on this subject. 'Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself: I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father,' John 10:17, 18.

This, then, was the commandment to which he rendered willing obedience, when he said,' O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done,' Matt. 26:42. '

The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?' John 18:11. In conformity with this, the apostle applies to him the following words: 'Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared

me. Then said I, Lo I come to do thy will, O God. By (his performance of) which will we are sanctified; through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all,' Heb. 10:5,10. «Being found in fashion as a man, (says St. Paul,) he became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross,' Phil. 2:8. Such was his obedience, an obedience unto the death of the cross. And by this his obedience unto the death of the cross, shall many be constituted righteous, or be justified. Where, then, is the imputation of his active

obedience for justification?" (Hare on Justification.) It proves nothing in favor of the imputation of Christ's righteousness considered as one, and including what he did and suffered, in the sense of its being reputed our righteousness, by transfer or by fiction of law. For though the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity is supposed to be taught in this chapter, and the imputation of Christ's obedience in one or other of the senses above given, is argued from this particular text, the

examination of the subject will show that the right understanding of the imputation of Adam's sin wholly overthrows both the Antinomian and Calvinistic view of the imputation of Christ's righteousness. This argument is very ably developed by Goodwin. (Treatise on Justification.)

"Because the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, is frequently produced to prove the imputation of Christ's righteousness; I shall lay down, with as much plainness as I can, in what sense the Scriptures

countenance that imputation. The Scriptures own no other imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, than of Christ's righteousness to those that believe. The righteousness of Christ is imputed, or given to those that believe, not in the letter or formality of it, but in blessings, privileges, and benefits purchased of God by the merit of it. So the sin of Adam is imputed to his posterity, not in the letter and formality of it, (which is the imputation commonly urged,) but in the demerit of it, that is, in

the curse or punishment due to it. Therefore, as concerning this imputation of Adam's sin, I answer.

"First, the Scripture nowhere affirms, either the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, or of the righteousness of Christ to those that believe; neither is such a manner of speaking any ways agreeable to the language of the Holy Ghost: for in the Scriptures, wheresoever the term imputing is used, it is, only applied to, or spoken of something of the same

persons, to whom the imputation is said to be made, and never, to my remembrance, to, or of any thing of another's.

So, Rom. 4:3, ' Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness,' that is his own believing was imputed to him, not another man's. So, verse 5, but' to him that worketh not, but believeth, his faith is imputed to him for righteousness.' So, Psalm 106:30, 31, ' Phineas stood up and executed judgment, and that' (act of

his)' was imputed to him for righteousness,'

that is, received a testimony from God of being a righteous act. So again, 2 Cor. 5:19,' not imputing their trespasses,' (their own trespasses,)' unto them.'

"Secondly, When a thing is said simply to be imputed, as sin, folly, and so righteousness, the phrase is not to be taken concerning the bare acts of the things, as if (for example) to impute sin to a man, signified this, to repute the man, (to whom

sin is imputed,) to have committed a sinful act, or, as if to impute folly, were simply to charge a man to have done foolishly: but when it is applied to things that are evil, and attributed to persons that have power over those, to whom the imputation is made, it signifieth, the charging the guilt of what is imputed upon the head of the person to whom the imputation is made, with an intent of inflicting some condign punishment upon him. So that to impute sin (in Scripture phrase) is to charge the guilt of sin upon

a man with a purpose to punish him for it. Thus Rom. 5:13, sin is said, 'not to be imputed where there is no law.' The meaning cannot be, that the act which a man doth, whether there be a law or no law, should not be imputed to him. The law doth not make any act to be imputed, or ascribed to a man, which might not as well have been imputed without it. But the meaning is, that there is no guilt charged by God upon men, nor any punishment inflicted for any thing done by them, but only by virtue

of the law prohibiting. In which respect the law is said to be the strength of sin, because it gives a condemning power against the doer, to that which otherwise would have had none, 1 Cor. 15:56 So again, Job 24:12, when it is said, 'God doth not lay folly to the charge of them, (i, e, impute folly to them,) that make the souls of the slain to cry out,' the meaning is, not that God doth not repute them to have committed the acts of oppression, or murder. For supposing they did such things, it is impossible but

God should repute them to have done them: but that God doth not visibly charge the guilt of these sins upon them, or inflict punishment for them. So, 2 Sam. 19:19, when Shimei prayeth David not to impute wickedness unto him, his meaning is, not to desire David not to think he had done wickedly in railing upon him, (for himself confesseth this in the very next words,) but not to inflict the punishment which that wickedness deserved. So when David himself pronounceth the man blessed to whom the

Lord imputeth not sin, his meaning is, not that there is any man, whom the Lord would not repute to have committed those acts of sin, which he has committed; but that such are blessed on whom God will not charge the demerit of their sins in the punishment due to them. So yet again, (to forbear farther citations,) 2 Cor. 5:19, when God is said, ' not to impute their sins unto men,' the meaning is, not that God should not repute men to have committed such and such sins against him; but that

he freely discharges them from the punishment due to them. By all which testimonies from Scripture, concerning the constant use of the term imputing, or imputation, it is evident that proposition,' that the transgression of the law is imputable from one person to another,' hath no foundation in Scripture.

"And, therefore, thirdly and lastly, to come home to the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, I answer,

"First, that either to say that the righteousness of

Christ is imputed to his posterity (of believers) or the sin of Adam to his, are both expressions, at least, unknown to the Holy Ghost in the Scriptures. There is neither word, nor syllable, nor letter, nor tittle of any such thing to be found there. But that the faith of him that believeth, is imputed for righteousness, are words which the Holy Ghost useth.

"But, secondly, because I would make no exceptions against words, farther than necessity enforceth, I grant, there are

expressions in Scripture concerning both the communication of Adam's sin with his posterity, and the righteousness of Christ with those that believe, that will fairly enough bear the term of imputation, if it be rightly understood, and according to the use of it in Scripture upon other occasions. But as it is commonly taken and understood by many, it occasions much error and mistake.

"Concerning Adam's sin or disobedience, many are

said to be 'made sinners by it,' Rom. 5:19.

And so 'by the obedience of Christ,' it is said (in the same place) 'that many shall be made righteous.' But if men will exchange language with the Holy Ghost, they must see that they make him no loser. If, when they say, 'Adam's sin is imputed to all unto condemnation,' their meaning be the same with the Holy Ghost's, when he saith, ' that by the disobedience of one, many were made sinners,' there is no harm done: but it is

evident by what many speak, that the Holy Ghost and they are not of one mind, touching the imputation or communication of Adam's sin with his posterity, but that they differ as much in meaning, as in words. If when they say, 'Adam's sin is imputed to all unto condemnation,' their meaning be this, that the guilt of Adam's sin is charged upon his whole posterity, or that the punishment of Adam's sin redounded from his person to his whole posterity, a main part of which

punishment lieth in that original defilement wherein they are all conceived and born, and whereby they are made truly sinners before God; if this be the meaning of the term imputation, when applied to Adam's sin, let it pass. But if the meaning be, that that sinful act, wherein Adam transgressed when he ate the forbidden fruit, is, in the letter and formality of it, imputed to his posterity, so that by this imputation all his posterity are made formally sinners; this is an imputation which

the Scripture will never justify."

The last text necessary to mention is Rom. 4:6, "Even as David declareth the blessedness of the man to whom God imputeth righteousness without works." Here again the expositors of this class assume, even against the letter of the text and context, that the righteousness which God is said to impute is the righteousness of Christ. But Calvin himself may here be sufficient to answer them. "In the fourth

chapter of the Romans the apostle first mentions an imputation of righteousness, and immediately represents it as consisting in remission of sins. David, says he, describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying,' Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven,' &c. He there argues, not concerning a branch, but the whole of justification; he also adduces the definition of it given by David, when he pronounces those to be

blessed who receive the free forgiveness of their sins, whence it appears that this righteousness is simply opposed to guilt." (Institut. lib. iii, cap. 11.) The imputation of righteousness in this passage is, in Calvin's view, therefore, the simple, non-imputation of sin, or, in other words, the remission of sins.

In none of these passages, is there, then, any thing found to countenance even that second view of imputation, which consists in the accounting the

righteousness of Christ in justification to be our righteousness. It is only imputed in the benefit and effect of it, that is, in the blessings and privileges purchased by it; and though we may use the phrase, the imputed righteousness of Christ, in this, latter sense, qualifying our meaning like Parceus who says, "In this sense imputed righteousness is called the righteousness of Christ, by way of merit or effect, because it is procured for us by the merit of Christ, not because it is subjectively or

inherently in Christ;" yet since this manner of speaking has no foundation in Scripture, and must generally lead to misapprehensions, it will be found more conducive to the cause of truth to confine ourselves to the language of the Scriptures. According to them, there is no fictitious accounting either of what Christ did or suffered, or of both united, to us, as being done and suffered by us, through our union with him, or through his becoming our legal representative; but his active and passive

righteousness, advanced in dignity by the union of the Divine nature and perfection, is the true meritorious cause of our justification. It is that great whole which constitutes his "merits;" that is the consideration, in view of which the offended but merciful Governor of the world, has determined it to be a just and righteous, as well as a merciful act, to justify the ungodly; and, for the sake of this perfect obedience of our Lord to the will of the Father, an obedience extending unto "death, even the death of

the cross," to every penitent sinner who believes in him, but considered still in his own person as "ungodly," and meriting nothing but punishment, "his faith is imputed for righteousness;" it is followed by the remission of his sins and all the benefits of the evangelical covenant.

This imputation of faith for righteousness is the third opinion which we proposed to examine.

That this is the doctrine taught by the express letter

of Scripture no one can deny, and, as one well observes, "what that is which is imputed for righteousness in justification, all the wisdom and learning of men is not so fit or able to determine, as the Holy Ghost, speaking in Scripture, he being the great secretary of heaven, and privy to all the counsels of God." "Abraham believed God and it was imputed unto him for righteousness," Rom. 4:3. "To him that worketh not, but believed on him that justifieth the

ungodly, his faith is counted to him for righteousness," verse 5. "We say that faith was imputed to him for righteousness," verse 9. "Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him, but for us to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe in him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead," verses 22-24.

The testimony of the apostle, then, being so express on this point, the imputation of faith for righteousness must be

taken to be the doctrine of the New Testament, unless, indeed, we admit, with the advocates of the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, that faith is here used metonymically for the object of faith, that is, the righteousness of Christ. The context of the above passages, however, is sufficient to refute this, and makes it indubitable that the apostle uses the term faith in its proper and literal sense. In verse 5, he calls the faith of him that believeth, and which is imputed to him for

righteousness, "his faith;" but in what sense could this be taken if St. Paul meant by "his faith," the object of his faith, namely, the righteousness of Christ? And how could that be his before the imputation was made to him? Again, in verse 5, the faith spoken of is opposed to works; "To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted to him for righteousness." Finally, in verse 22, the faith imputed to us is described to be our " believing in Him who

raised up our Lord Jesus from the dead;' so that the apostle has, by these explanations, rendered it impossible for us to understand him as meaning any thing else by faith, but the act of believing. To those who will, notwithstanding this evidence from the context, still insist upon understanding faith, in these passages, to mean the righteousness of Christ, Baxter bluntly observes, "If it be not faith indeed that the apostle meaneth, the context is so far from relieving our

understandings, that it contributed to our unavoidable deceit or ignorance. Read over the texts, and put but 'Christ's righteousness' every where instead of the word `faith,' and see what a scandalous paraphrase you will make. The Scripture is not so audaciously to be corrected." Some farther observations will, however, be necessary for the clear apprehension of this doctrine.

We have already seen, in establishing the Christian doctrine of the atonement,

that the law of God inflicts the penalty of death upon every act of disobedience, and that all men have come under that penalty. That men, having become totally corrupt, are not capable of obedience in future. That if they were, there is nothing in the nature of that future obedience to be a consideration for the forgiveness of past offences, under a righteous government. It follows, therefore, that, by moral obedience, or attempted and professed moral obedience, there can be no remission of sins, that is,

no deliverance from the penalty of offences actually committed. This is the ground of the great argument of the Apostle Paul in his Epistle to the Romans. He proves both Jews and Gentiles under sin; that the whole world is guilty before God; and by consequence under his wrath, under condemnation, from which they could only be relieved by the Gospel.

In his argument with the Jews the subject is farther opened. They sought justification by "works of

law." If we take "works" to mean obedience both to the moral and ceremonial law it makes no difference; for, as they had given up the typical character of their sacrifices, and their symbolical reference to the death of Messiah, the performance of their religious rites was no longer an expression of faith; it was brought down to the same principle as obedience to the moral law, a simple compliance with the commands of God. Their case, then, was this, they were sinners on conviction of their law, and

by obedience to it they sought justification, ignorant both of its spiritual meaning and large extent, and unmindful, too, of this obvious principle, that no acts of obedience, even if perfect, could take away past transgression. The apostle's great axiom on this subject is, that "by works of law, no man can be justified," and the doctrine of justification, which he teaches, is the opposite of theirs. It is, that men are sinners; that they must confess themselves such, and join to this confession a true

repentance. That justification is a gratuitous act of God's mercy, a procedure of pure "grace," not of "debt." That in order to the exercise of this grace, on the part of God, Christ was set forth as a propitiation for sin; that his death, under this character, is a "demonstration of the righteousness of God" in the free and gratuitous remission of sins; and that this actual remission or justification, follows upon believing in Christ, because faith, under this gracious constitution and method of

justification, is accounted to men for righteousness; in other words, that righteousness is imputed to them upon their believing, which imputation of righteousness is, as he teaches us, in the passages before quoted, the forgiveness of sins; for to have faith counted or imputed for righteousness is explained by David, in the psalm which the apostle quotes, (Rom. 4,) to have sin forgiven, covered, and not imputed.

That this was no new doctrine, he shows also

from the justification of Abraham. "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness," Rom. 4:3. "Know ye, therefore, that they which are of the faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, in thee shall all nations be blessed. So these which are of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham," Gal. 3:7-9.

On the one hand, therefore, it is the plain doctrine of Scripture that "man is not, and never was in any age, justified by works of any kind; whether moral or ceremonial; on the other, that he is justified by the imputation and accounting of "faith for righteousness." On this point, until the Antinomian corruption began to infest the reformed Churches, the leading commentators, from the earliest ages, were very uniform and explicit. That when faith is said to be imputed to us for righteousness, the word is

taken literally, "and not tropically, was," says Goodwin, "the common interpretation anciently received and followed by the principal lights of the Church of God; and for fifteen hundred years together (as far as my memory will assist me) was never questioned or contradicted. Neither did the contrary opinion ever look out into the world, till the last age. So that it is but a calumny brought upon it, (unworthy the tongue or pen of any sober man,) to make either Arminius or Socinus the author of it.

And for this last hundred years and upward, from Luther's and Calvin's times, the stream of interpreters agrees therewith.

"Tertullian, who wrote about the year 194, in his fifth book against Marcion, says, 'But how the children of faith? or of whose faith, if not of Abraham's? For if Abraham believed God, and that was imputed unto him for righteousness, and he thereby deserved the name of a father of many nations, we, also, by believing God, are justified as Abraham was.'

Therefore Tertullian's opinion directly is, that the faith which is said to be imputed to Abraham for righteousness, is faith properly taken, and not the righteousness of Christ apprehended by faith.

"Origen who lived about the year 203, in his fourth book upon the Romans, chap, 4, verse 3, says,' It seems, therefore, that in this place also, whereas many faiths (that is, many acts of believing) of Abraham had gone before, now all his faith was collected and united

together, and so was accounted unto him for righteousness.'

"Justin Martyr, who lived before them both, and not long after the Apostle John's time, about the year 130, in his disputation with Trypho the Jew, led them both to that interpretation. 'Abraham carried not away the testimony of righteousness, because of his circumcision, but because of his faith. For before he was circumcised, this was pronounced of him, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed

unto him for righteousness.'

"Chrysostom, upon Gal. 3, says, 'For what was Abraham the worse for not being under the law?

Nothing at all. For his faith was sufficient unto him for righteousness.' If Abraham's faith was sufficient unto him for righteousness, it must needs be imputed by God for righteousness unto him; for it is this imputation from God that must make that sufficiency of it unto Abraham. That which will not pass in

account with God for righteousness, will never be sufficient for righteousness unto the creature.

"St. Augustine, who lived about the year 390, gives frequent testimony to this interpretation.

Upon Psa. 148, 'For we by believing have found that which they (the Jews) lost by not believing.

For Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness.' There-fore his opinion clearly is, that it was Abraham's faith, or

believing properly taken, that was imputed unto him for righteousness, and not the righteousness of Christ. For that faith of his, which was so imputed, he opposeth to the unbelief of the Jews, whereby they lost the grace and favor of God.

Now the righteousness of Christ is not opposed to unbelief, but faith properly taken. Again, writing upon Psalm 70, ' For I believe in him that justifieth the ungodly, that my faith may be imputed unto me for righteousness.' The same

father yet again, in his tract of Nature and Grace: '

But if Christ died not in vain, the ungodly is justified in him alone: to whom, believing in him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness.'

"Primasius, about the year 500, writes upon Romans 4, verse 3, ' Abraham's faith by the gift of God was so great, that both his former sins were forgiven him, and this faith of his alone preferred in acceptation before all righteousness.'

"Bede, who lived somewhat before the year 700, upon Romans 4, verse 5, observes, 'What faith, but that which the apostle in another place fully defined? neither circumcision, nor uncircumcision, availeth any thing, but faith which worketh by love; not any faith, but that faith which worketh by love.' Certainly that faith, which Paul defined to by a faith working by love, cannot be conceived to be the righteousness of Christ; and yet this faith it was, in the judgment of this

author, that was imputed unto Abraham for righteousness.

"Haymo, about the year 840, on Rom. 4:3, writes, ' Because he believed God, it was imputed unto him for righteousness, that is, unto remission of sins, because by that faith, wherewith he believed, he was made righteous.'

"Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury, about the year 1090, upon Rom. 4:3,' That he (meaning Abraham) believed so strongly, was by God imputed for righteousness unto him;

that is, &c, by his believing he was imputed righteous before God.'

"From all these testimonies it is apparent, that the interpretation of this scripture which we contend for, anciently obtained in the Church of God, and no man was found to open his mouth against it, till it had been established for above a thousand years. Come we to the times of reformation; here we shall find it still maintained by men of the greatest authority and learning.

"Luther on Gal. 3:6, 'Christian righteousness is an affiance or faith in the Son of God, which affiance is imputed unto righteousness for Christ's sake.' And in the same place, not long after, '

God for Christ's sake, in whom I have begun to believe, accounts this (my) imperfect faith, for perfect righteousness.'

"Bucer, upon Rom. 4:3,' Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness, that is, he accounted this faith for righteousness unto

him.' So that by believing he obtained this, that God esteemed him a righteous man.'

"Peter Martyr declares himself of the same judgment, upon Rom. 4:3,' To be imputed for righteousness in another sense, that by which we ourselves are reckoned in the number of the righteous. And this Paul attributes to faith only.'

"Calvin has the same interpretation upon Rom. 4:3, 'Wherefore Abraham, by believing, doth only embrace the grace

tendered unto him, that it might not be in vain. If this be imputed unto him for righteousness, it follows, that he is no otherwise righteous, but as trusting or relying upon the goodness of God, he hath boldness to hope for all things from him.' Again, upon verse 5,' Faith is imputed for righteousness, not because it carries any merit from us, but because it apprehends the goodness of God,' Hence it appears, that he never thought of a tropical or metonymical sense in the word faith; but that he took it in the plain,

ready, and grammatical signification.

"Musculus contends for this imputation, also, in his common place of justification, sect. 5,' this faith should be in high esteem with us; not in regard of the proper quality of it, but in regard of the purpose of God, whereby he hath decreed, for Christ's sake, to impute it for righteous, ness unto those that believe in him.' The same author upon Gal. 3:6 'What did Abraham that should be imputed unto him for righteousness,

but only this, that he believed God?' Again, 'But when he firmly believed God promising, that very faith was imputed to him, in the place of righteousness, that is, he was of God reputed righteous for that faith, and absolved from all his sins.'

"Bullinger gives the same interpretation, upon Romans 4, 'Abraham committed himself unto God by believing, and this very thing was imputed unto him for righteousness." And so, upon Gal.

3:6,' It was imputed unto him for righteousness, that is, that very faith of Abraham was imputed to him for righteousness, while he was yet uncircumcised.'

"Gaulter comes behind none of the former, in avouching the grammatical against the rhetorical interpretation, upon Romans 4:3,' Abraham believed God, and he, viz. God, imputed unto him this faith for righteousness.'

"Illyricus forsakes not his fellow interpreters in this

point, upon Romans 4:3, 'That same believing was imputed unto him for righteousness.'

"Pellicanus, in like manner, says, upon Gen. 20:6, 'Abraham simply believed the word of God, and required not a sign of the Lord, and God imputed that very faith unto Abraham himself for righteousness.'

"Hunnius, another divine, sets to his seal, on Romans 4:3, ' The faith whereby Abraham believed God promising, was imputed

unto him for righteousness.'

"Beza, upon the same scripture, says, ' Here the business is, con-corning that which was imputed unto him, viz. his faith.'

"Junius and Tremellius are likewise of the same mind, on Gen, 15:6,' God esteemed (or accounted) him for righteous though wanting righteousness, and reckoned this in the place of righteousness, that he embraced the promise with a firm belief.'" (Vide Goodwin on Justification.)

Our English divines have generally differed in their interpretations, as they have embraced or opposed the Calvinistic system; but among the more moderate of that school there have not been wanting many who have, bound their system to the express letter and obvious meaning of Scripture, on this point; not to mention either those who have adopted that middle scheme generally, but not with exactness attributed to Baxter, or the followers of the remonstrants.

When, however, we say, that faith is imputed for righteousness, in order to prevent misapprehension, and fully to answer the objections raised on the other side, the meaning of the different terms of this pro-position ought to be explained. They are Righteousness, faith, and imputation.

To explain the first, reference has sometimes been made to the three terms used by the Apostle Paul, dikaioma, dikaios, and dikaiosune; of which, says Baxter, "the first

usually signifies the practical or perceptive matter, that is, righteousness; the second, active, efficient justification; the third, the state of the just, qualitative or relative, or ipsam justitiam" Others have made these distinctions a little different; but not much help is to be derived from them, and it is much more important to observe, that the apostle often uses the term dikaiosune, righteousness, in a passive sense for justification itself. So in Gal. 2:21, "If righteousness

(justification) come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." Gal. 3:21, "For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness (justification) should have been by the law." Rom. 9:30, "The Gentiles have attained to righteousness, (justification,) even the righteousness (justification) which is by faith." And in Rom. 10:4, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth;" where, also, we must understand righteous, ness to mean justification. Rom. 5:18, 19,

will also show, that with the apostle, “to make righteous," and "to justify," signify the same thing; for "justification of life," in the 18th verse, is called in the 19th, being "made righteous." To be accounted righteous is, then, in the apostle's style, where there has been personal guilt, to be justified; and what is accounted or imputed to us for righteousness, is accounted or imputed to us for our justification.

The second term of the above proposition which it

is necessary to explain, is faith. The true nature of justifying faith will be explained below; all that is here necessary to remark is, that it is not every act of faith, or faith in the general truths of revelation, which is imputed for righteousness, though it supposes them all, and is the completion of them all. By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God; but it is not our faith in creation, which is imputed to us for righteousness. So in the case of Abraham; he not only had faith in the

truths of the religion, of which he was the teacher and guardian, but had exercised affiance, also, in some particular promises of God, before he exhibited that great act of faith, which was

"counted to him for righteousness," and which made his justification the pattern of the justification of sinful men in all ages. But having received the promise of a son, from whom the Messiah should spring, in whom all nations were to be blessed; and, "being not weak in faith, he

considered not his own body now dead, when he was about a hundred years old, nor yet the deadness of Sarah's womb; he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully persuaded that what he had promised he was able also to perform, and therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness? Rom. 4:19-23. His faith had Messiah for its great and ultimate object, and in its nature it was an entire affiance in the promise and

faithfulness of God, with reference to the holy seed. So the object of that faith which is imputed to us for righteousness is Christ; Christ as having made atonement for our sins, (the remission of our sins, as expressly taught by St. Paul, being obtained by "faith in his blood;") and it is in its nature an entire affiance in the promise of God to this effect, made to us through his atonement, and founded upon it. Faith being thus understood, excludes all notion of its meritorious ness. It is not faith, generally considered

which is imputed to us for righteousness; but faith (trust) in an atonement offered by another in our behalf; by which trust in something without us, we acknowledge our own insufficiency, guilt, and unworthiness, and directly ascribe the merit to that in which we trust, and which is not our own, namely, the propitiation of the blood of Christ.

The third term is imputation. The original verb is well enough translated to impute, in the sense of to reckon, to

account; but, as we have stated above, it is never used to signify imputation in the sense of accounting the actions of one person to have been performed by another.

A man's sin or righteousness is imputed to him, when he is considered as actually the doer of sinful or of righteous acts, in which sense the word repute is in more general use; and he is, in consequence, reputed a vicious or a holy man. A man's sin or righteousness is imputed to him in its

legal consequence, under a government by rewards and punishments; and then to impute sin or righteousness, signifies, in a legal sense, to reckon and to account it, to acquit or condemn, and forthwith to punish, or to exempt from punishment. Thus Shimei entreats David, that he would "not impute folly to him," that is, that he would not punish his folly. In this sense too, David speaks of the blessedness of the man, to whom the Lord "imputeth not sin," that is, whom he forgives, so that the legal consequence of

his sin shall not fall upon him. This non-imputation of sin, to a sinner, is expressly called the "imputation of righteousness, without works;" the imputation of righteousness is, then, the non-punishment, or pardon of sin; and if this passage be read in its connection, it will also be seen, that by "imputing" faith for righteousness, the apostle means precisely the same thing. "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for

righteousness;" even as David, also, describeth the man to whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, blessed is the man whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered, blessed is the man to whom the Lord "inputeth not sin"

This quotation from David would have been nothing to the apostle's purpose, unless he had understood the forgiveness of sins, and the imputation of righteousness, and the non-imputation of sin, to signify the same thing as

"counting faith for righteousness," with only this difference, that the introduction of the term "faith," marks the manner in which the forgiveness of sin is obtained. To impute faith for righteousness, is nothing more than to be justified by faith, which is also called by St. Paul, "being made righteous," that is, being placed by an act of free forgiveness, through faith in Christ, in the condition of righteous men, in this respect, that the penalty of the law does not lie against them, and

that they are restored to the Divine favor.

From this brief, but, it is hoped, clear explanation of these terms, righteousness, faith, and imputation, it will appear, that it is not quite correct in the advocates of the Scripture doctrine of the imputation of faith for righteousness, to say, that our faith in Christ is accepted in the place of personal obedience to the law, except, indeed, in this loose sense, that our faith in Christ as effectually exempts us from punishment, as if we had

been personally obedient. The Scriptural doctrine is rather, that the death of Christ is accepted in the place of our personal punishment, on condition of our faith in him; and, that when faith in him is actually exerted, then comes in, on the part of God, the act of imputing, or reckoning righteousness to us; or, what is the same thing, accounting faith for righteousness, that is, pardoning our offences through faith, and treating us as the objects of his restored favor.

To this doctrine of the imputation of faith for righteousness, the principal objections which have been made admit of an easy answer.

The first is that of the papists, who take the term justification to signify the making men morally just or righteous; and they, therefore, argue, that as faith alone is not righteousness in the moral sense, it would be false, and, therefore, impossible, to impute it for righteousness. But, as we have proved from

Scripture, that justification simply signifies the pardon of sin, this objection has no foundation.

A second objection is, that if faith, that is, believing, is imputed for righteousness, then justification is by works, or by somewhat in ourselves. In this objection, the term works is equivocal. If it mean works of obedience to the moral law, the objection is unfounded, for faith is not a work of this kind; and if it mean the merit of works of any kind, it is equally without foundation, for no

merit is allowed to faith, and faith, in the sense of exclusive affiance, or trusting in the merits of another, shuts out, by its very nature, all assumption of merit to ourselves, or there would be no need of resorting to another's merit; but if it mean, that faith or believing is the doing of something, in order to our justification, it is, in this view, the performance of a condition, a sine qua non, which is not only not forbidden by Scripture, but required of us, "this is the work of God, that ye

believe on him whom he hath sent;" "he that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." And so far is this considered by the Apostle Paul, as prejudicing the free grace of God in our justification, that he makes our justification by faith, the proof of its gratuitous nature, "for by grace are ye saved, through faith"

"Therefore, it is by faith, that it might be through grace."

A third objection is, that the imputation of faith for

righteousness gives occasion to boasting, which is condemned by the Gospel. The answer to this is, 1. That the objection lies with equal strength against the theory of the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, since faith is required in order to that imputation. 2. Boasting of our faith is cut off by the consideration, that this faith itself is the gift of God. 3. If it were not, yet the blessings which follow upon our faith, are not given with reference to any worth or merit which there may be in our

believing, but are given with respect to the death of Christ, from the bounty and grace of God. 4. St. Paul was clearly of the contrary opinion, who tells us that "boasting is excluded by the law of faith:" the reason of which has been already stated, that trust in another for salvation, does, ipso facto, attribute the power, and consequently the honor of saving, to another, and denies both to ourselves.

Since, then, we are "justified by faith," our next inquiry must be,

somewhat more particularly, into the specific quality of that faith, which thus by the appointment of God, leads to this important change in our relations to the Being, whom we have offended, so that our offences are freely forgiven, and we are restored to his favor.

On the subject of justifying faith, so many distinctions have been set up, so many logical terms and definitions are found in the writings of systematic divines, and often, as Baxter has it, "such

quibbling and jingling of a mere sound of words," that the simple Christian, to whom this subject ought always to be made plain, has often been grievously perplexed, and no small cause has been given for the derision of infidels On this, as on other points, we appeal "to the law and testimony," to Christ and his apostles, who are, at once, the only true authorities, and teachers of the greatest simplicity.

We remark, then,

1. That in Scripture faith is presented to us under two

leading views. The first is that of assent or persuasion; the second, that of confidence or reliance. That the former may be separated from the latter, is also plain, though the latter cannot exist without the former. Faith, in the sense of intellectual assent to truth, is allowed to be possessed by devils. A dead inoperative faith, is also supposed, or declared, to be possessed by wicked men, professing Christianity; for our Lord represents persons coming to him at the last day, saying, "Lord, have we not

prophesied in thy name," &c, to whom he will say, "Depart from me, I never knew you," and yet the charge, in this case, does not lie against the sincerity of their belief, but against their conduct as "workers of iniquity." As this distinction is taught in Scripture, so it is also observed' in experience, that assent to the truths of revealed religion may result from examination and conviction, while yet the spirit and conduct may be unrenewed and wholly worldly.

On the other hand, that the faith which God requires of men always comprehends confidence or reliance, as well as assent or persuasion, is equally clear, The faith by which "the elders obtained a good report," was of this character; it united assent to the truth of God's revelations, to a noble confidence in his promises. "Our fathers trusted in Thee, and were not confounded." We have a farther illustration in our Lord's address to his disciples upon the

withering away of the fig tree,

"Have faith in God." He did not question whether they believed the existence of God, but exhorted them to confidence in his promises, when called by him to contend with mountainous difficulties. "Have faith in God, for verily I say unto you, that whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that these things which he saith shall come to pass, he shall have

whatsoever he saith." It was in reference to his simple confidence in Christ's power, that our Lord so highly commended the centurion, Matt. 8:10, and said, "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." And all the instances of faith in the persons miraculously healed by Christ, were also of this kind: it was belief in his claims, and confidence in his goodness and power.

The faith in Christ, which in the New Testament is connected with salvation, is clearly of this nature; that

is, it combines assent with reliance, belief with trust. "Whatsoever ye ask the Father in my name," that is, in dependence upon my interest and merits, "he shall give it you." Christ was preached both to Jews and Gentiles as the object of their trust, because he was preached as the only true sacrifice for sin; and they were required to renounce their dependence upon their own accustomed sacrifices, and to transfer that dependence to his death and mediation, and "in his name shall the Gentiles trust." He is set

forth as a propitiation, "through faith in his blood;"

which faith can neither merely mean assent to the historical fact that his blood was shed by a violent death, nor mere assent to the general doctrine that his blood had an atoning quality; but as all expiatory offerings were trusted in as the means of propitiation both among Jews and Gentiles, that faith or trust was now to be exclusively rendered to the blood of Christ, heightened by the

stronger demonstrations of a Divine appointment.

To the most unlettered Christian this then will be most obvious, that that faith in Christ which is required of us, consists both of assent and trust; and the necessity of maintaining these inseparably united will farther appear by considering, that it is not a blind and superstitious trust in the sacrifice of Christ, like that of the heathens in their sacrifices, which leads to salvation; nor the presumptuous trust

of wicked and impenitent men, who depend on Christ to save them in their sins; but such a trust as is exercised according to the authority and direction of the word of God; so that to know the Gospel in its leading principles, and to have a cordial belief in it, is necessary to that more specific act of faith which is called reliance, or in systematic language, fiducially assent, of which cometh salvation. The Gospel, as the scheme of man's salvation, supposes that he is under law; that this law of God has been

violated by all; and that every man is under sentence of death. - Serious consideration of our ways, confession of tike fact, and sorrowful conviction of the evil and danger of sin, will follow the gift of repentance, and a cordial belief of the testimony of God, and we shall thus turn to God with contrite hearts, and earnest prayers and supplications for his mercy. This is called "repentance toward God;" and repentance being the first subject of evangelical preaching, and then the belief of the Gospel, it is

plain that Christ is only immediately held out in this Divine plan of our redemption as the object of trust in order to forgiveness to persons in this state of penitence, and under this sense of danger. The degree of sorrow for sin, and alarm upon this discovery of our danger as sinners, is nowhere fixed in Scripture; only it is supposed every where, that it is such as to lead men to inquire earnestly "what shall I do to be saved?" and to use all the appointed means of salvation, as those who feel that their

salvation is at issue; that they are in a lost condition, and must be pardoned or perish. To all such persons, Christ, as the only atonement for sin, is exhibited as the object of their trust, with the promise of God, "that whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life." Nothing is required of such but this actual trust in, and personal apprehension or taking hold of the merits of Christ's death as a sacrifice for sin; and upon their thus believing they are justified,

their faith is "counted for righteousness."

This appears to be the plain Scriptural representation of this doctrine, and we may infer from it, 1. That the faith by which we are justified is not a mere assent to the doctrines of the Gospel, which leaves the heart unmoved and unaffected by a sense of the evil and danger of sin, and the desire of salvation, though it supposes this assent. nor, 2. Is it that more lively and cordial assent to, and belief in the doctrine of the Gospel,

touching our sinful and lost condition, which is wrought in the heart by the Spirit of God, and from which springeth repentance, though this must precede it; nor, 3. Is it only the assent of the mind to the method by which God justifies the ungodly by faith in the sacrifice of his Son, though this is an element of it; but it is a hearty concurrence of "the will and affections with this plan of salvation, which implies a renunciation of every other refuge," "and an actual Trust in the Savior, and personal

apprehension of his merits: such a belief of the Gospel by the power of the Spirit of God as leads us to come to Christ, to receive Christ, to trust, in Christ, and to commit the keeping of our souls into his hands, in humble confidence of his ability and his willingness to save us." (Bunting's Sermon on Justification,)

This is that qualifying condition to which the promise of God annexes justification; that without which justification would not take place; and in this sense it is that we are

justified by faith; not by the merit of faith, but by faith instrumentally as this condition, for its connection with the benefit arises from the merits of Christ, and the promise of God. "If Christ had not merited, God had not promised; if God had not promised, justification had never followed upon this faith; so that the indissoluble connection of faith and justification is from God's institution, whereby he hath bound himself to give the benefit upon performance of the condition. Yet there is an

aptitude in this faith to be made a condition, for no other act can receive Christ as a priest propitiating, and pleading the propitiation, and the promise of God for his sake to give the benefit. As receiving Christ and the gracious promise in this manner, it acknowledgeth man's guilt, and so man renounceth all righteousness in himself, and honoureth God the Father, and Christ the Son, the only Redeemer. It glorifies God's mercy and free grace in the highest degree.

It acknowledgeth on earth, as it will be perpetually acknowledged in heaven, that the whole salvation of sinful man, from the beginning to the last degree thereof, whereof there shall be no end, is from God's freest love, Christ's merit and inter, cession, his own gracious promise, and the power of his own Holy Spirit." (Lawson.)

Justification by faith alone is thus clearly the doctrine of the Scripures; and it was this great doctrine brought forth again from the Scriptures into public view,

and maintained by their authority, which constituted one of the main pillars of the reformation from popery; and on which no compromise could be allowed with that corrupt Church which had substituted for it the merit of works. Melancthon, in his Apology for the Augsburg Confession, thus speaks:- "To represent justification by faith only has been considered objectionable, though Paul concludes that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law;' ' that we are justified freely by

his grace,' and ' that it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast.' If the use of the exclusive term only is deemed inadmissible, let them expunge from the writings of the apostles the exclusive phrases, 'by grace' 'not of works' 'the gift of God? and others of similar import."

"We are accounted righteous before God," says the eleventh Article of the Church of England,

"only for the merit of our Lord Jesus Christ, by faith, not for our works and

deservings;" and again, in the Homily on Salvation, St, Paul declares nothing upon the behalf of man, concerning his justification, but only a true and lively faith, which, nevertheless, is the gift of God and not man's only work without God. And yet that faith doth not shut out repentance, hope, love, dread, and the fear of God, to be joined with faith in every man that is justified; but only shutteth them out from the office of justifying, So that although they be all present together

in him that is justified, yet they justify not altogether."

It is an error, therefore, to suppose, as many have done, that the doctrine of justification by faith alone, is peculiarly a Calvinistic one. It has, in consequence, often been attacked under this mistake, and confounded with the peculiarities of that system, by writers of limited reading, or perverting ingenuity. It is the doctrine, as we have seen, not of the Calvinistic confessions only, but of the Lutheran Church, and of

the Church of England. It was the doctrine of the Dutch Remonstrants, at least of the early divines of that party; and though among many divines of the Church of England, the errors of popery on the subject of justification have had their influence, and some, who have contended for justification by faith alone, have lowered the Scriptural standard of believing, the doctrine itself has often been very ably maintained by its later non-Calvinistic divines. Thus justification by faith alone: faith which excludes

all works, both of the ceremonial and moral law; all works performed by Gentiles under the law of nature; all works of evangelical obedience, though they spring from faith; has been defended by Whitby, in the preface to his notes on the Epistle to the Galatians, though he was a decided anti-Calvinist.

The same may be said of many others; and we may, finally, refer to Mr. Wesley, who revived, by his preaching and writings, an evangelical Arminianism in

this country; and who has most clearly and ably established this truth in connection with the doctrine of general redemption, and God's universal love to man.

"By affirming that faith is the term or condition of justification, I mean, first, that there is no justification without it. 'He that believeth not is condemned already,' and so long as he believeth not, that condemnation cannot be removed, but the 'wrath of God abideth on him.' As 'there is no other name

given under heaven, than that of Jesus of Nazareth,' no other merit whereby a condemned sinner can ever be saved from the guilt of sin; so there is no other way of obtaining a share in his merit, than by faith in his name. So that, as long as we are without this faith, we are

'strangers to the covenant of promise, we are aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and without God in the world.' Whatsoever virtues (so called) a man may have, I speak of those unto whom the Gospel is

preached; for 'what have I to do to judge them that are without? Whatsoever good works (so accounted) he may do, it profiteth not; he is still a child of wrath, still under the curse, till he believe in Jesus.

"Faith, therefore, is the necessary condition of justification, Yea, and the only necessary condition thereof. This is the second point carefully to be observed; that the very moment God giveth faith (for it is the gift of God) to the ' ungodly, that worketh not,' that 'faith is counted to him for righteousness.'

He hath no righteousness at all antecedent to this, not so much as negative righteousness, or innocence. But ' faith is imputed to him for righteousness,' the very moment that he believeth. Not that God (as was observed before) thinketh him to be what he is not. But as 'he made Christ to be a sin offering for us,' that is, treated him as a sinner, punished him for our sins; so he count-eth us righteous, from the time we believe in him; that is, he doth not punish us for our sins, yea, treats us as

though we were guiltless and righteous.

"Surely the difficulty of assenting to the proposition, that faith is the only condition of justification, must arise from not understanding it. - We mean thereby this much, that it is the only thing, without which no one is justified; the only thing that is immediately, indispensably, absolutely requisite in order to pardon. As, on the one hand, though a man should have every thing else, without faith, yet he cannot

be justified; so on the other, though he be supposed to want every thing else, yet if he hath faith, he cannot but be justified. For suppose a sinner of any kind or degree, in a full sense of his total ungodliness, of his utter inability to think, speak, or do good, and his absolute meetness for hell fire: suppose, I say, this sinner, helpless and hopeless, casts himself wholly on the mercy of God in Christ, (which indeed he cannot do but by the grace of God,) who can doubt but he is forgiven in that

moment? Who will affirm, that any more is indispensably required, before that sinner can be justified?" (Wesley's Sermons.) To the view of justifying faith we have attempted to establish, namely, the entire trust and reliance of an awakened and penitent sinner, in the atonement of Christ alone, as the meritorious ground of his pardon, some objections have been made, and some contrary hypotheses opposed, which it will be necessary to bring to the test of the word of God.

The general objection is, that it is a doctrine unfavorable to morality. This was the objection in St. Paul's day, and it has been urged through all ages ever since. It proceeds, however, upon a great misapprehension of the doctrine; and has sometimes been suggested by that real abuse of it, to which all truth is liable by men of perverted minds and corrupted hearts. Some of these have pretended, or deceived themselves into the conclusion, that if the atonement made for sin by

the death of Christ only be relied upon, however presumptuously, the sins which they commit will be forgiven; and that there is no motive, at least from fear of consequences, to avoid sin. Others observing this abuse, or misled, probably, by incautious statements of sincere persons on this point, have concluded this to be the logical consequence of the doctrine, however innocently it may sometimes be held. Attempts have, therefore, been made to guard the doctrine, and from these,

on the other hand, errors have arisen. The Romish Church contends for justification by inherent righteousness, and makes faith a part of that righteousness. Others contend, that faith signifies obedience; others place justification in faith and good works united; others hold that faith gives us an interest in the merit of Christ, to make up the deficiency of a sincere but imperfect obedience; others think that true faith is in itself essentially, and, per se, the necessary root of obedience.

The proper answer to the objection, that justification by faith alone leads to licentiousness, is, that "though we are justified by faith alone," the faith by which we are justified is not alone in the heart which exercises it. In receiving Christ, as the writers of the reformation often say, "faith is sola, yet not solitaria." It is not the trust of a man asleep and secure, but the trust of one awakened and aware of the peril of eternal death, as the wages of sin; it is not the trust of a man ignorant of the spiritual meaning of

God's holy law; but of one who is convinced and "slain" by it; not the trust of an impenitent, but of a penitent man; the trust of one, in a word, who feels, through the convincing power of the word and Spirit of God, that he is justly exposed to wrath, and in whom this conviction produces a genuine sorrow for sin, and an intense and supreme desire to be delivered from its penalty and dominion. Now that all this is substantially, or more particularly, in the experience of all who pass

into this state of justification through faith, is manifest from the seventh and eighth chapters of the Epistle to the Romans, in which the moral state of man is traced in the experience of St. Paul as an example, from his conviction for sin by the law of God, revealed to him in its spirituality, to his entrance into the condition and privileges of a justified state. We see here, guilt, fear, a vain struggle with bondage, poignant distress, self despair, readiness to submit to any effectual

mode of deliverance which may be offered, acceptance of salvation by Christ, the immediate removal of condemnation, dominion over sin, with all the fruits of regeneration, and the lofty hopes of the glory of God. So far, then, is the doctrine of justification by faith alone from leading to a loose and careless conduct, that that very state of mind in which alone this faith can be exercised, is one which excites the most earnest longings and efforts of mind to be free from the bondage of sin, as well as

from its penalty; and to be free from its penalty in order that freedom from its bondage may follow. As this is proved by the seventh chapter of the epistle referred to, so the former part of the eighth, which continues the discourse, (unfortunately broken by the division of the chapters,) shows the moral state which is the immediate result of "being in Christ Jesus," through the exercise of that faith which alone, as we have seen, can give us a personal interest in him. "There is now no condemnation to

them that are in Christ Jesus." This is the first result of the pardon of sin, a consequent exemption from condemnation, The next is manifestly concomitant with it, - "who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit," which is now in its fullness imparted to them; and by which, being regenerated, they are delivered from the bondage before described, and "walk" after his will, and under his sanctifying influence, This brings us precisely to the answer which the apostle himself gives to the objection to

which we are referring, in the sixth chapter - "What shall we say then? shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid; how shall we who are dead to sin live any longer therein?" The moral state of every man who is justified, is here described to be, that he is "dead to sin." Not that justification strictly is a death unto sin, or regeneration; but into this state it immediately brings us, so that, though they are properly distinguished in the order of our thoughts, and in the nature of things, they go

together; he to whom "there is no condemnation," walks not after the flesh, but after the Spirit; and he who experiences the "abounding of the grace of God" in his pardon, is "dead to sin," and cannot, therefore, continue therein. This is the effect of the faith that justifies; from that alone, as it brings us to Christ our deliverer, our entire deliverance from sin can follow; and thus the doctrine of faith becomes exclusively the doctrine of holiness, and points out the

only remedy for sin's dominion.

It is true, that some color would be given to the contrary opinion, were it to be admitted, that this act of faith, followed by our justification, did indefeasibly settle our right to eternal blessedness by a title not to be vitiated by any future transgression; but this doctrine, which forms a part of the theory of the Calvinists, we shall, in its place, show to be unscriptural. It is enough here to say, that it has no connection with the

doctrine of justification by faith alone, though so often ignorantly identified with) it. Our probation is not terminated by our pardon. Willful sin will infallibly plunge us again into condemnation, with heightened aggravations and hazards; and he only retains this state of favor who continues to believe with that same faith which brings back to him, not only the assurances of God's mercy, but the continually renewing influences of the Holy Spirit.

The doctrine of justification by faith alone, as stated in the Scriptures, needs not, therefore, any of those guards and cautions which we have enumerated above, and which all involve serious errors, which it may not be useless to point out.

1. The error of the Romish Church is to confound justification and sanctification. So the council of Trent declares, that "justification is not only the remission of sins, but also the sanctification of the inner man; and that

the only formal cause of justification is the righteousness of God, not that whereby he is just, but that by which he makes us just;" that is, inherently so, That justification and sanctification go together, we have seen; but this is not what is meant by the council. Their doctrine is, that man is made just or holy, and then justified. The answer to this has been already given. God "justified the ungodly;" and the Scriptures plainly mean by justification, not sanctification, but simply the remission of sin, as

already established. The passages, also, above quoted, show that those who hold this doctrine reverse the order of the Scriptures. The sanctification which constitutes a man inherently righteous, is concomitant with justification, but does not precede it. Before "condemnation" is taken away, he cries out, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death;" when "there is now no condemnation," he "walks not after the flesh, but after

the Spirit." In the nature of things, too, justification and sanctification are distinct, The active sanctification of the Spirit, taken in itself, either habitually or actually, and as inherent in us, can in nowise be justification, for justification is the remission of sins. God gave this Spirit to angels, he gave it to Adam in the day of creation, and this Spirit did sanctify, and now doth sanctify the blessed angels, yet this sanctification is not remission. Sanctification cannot be the formal cause of justification, any more

than justification can be the formal cause of glorification; for however all these may be connected, they are things perfectly distinct and different in their nature. "There be two kinds of Christian righteousness,"

says Hooker, "the one without us, which we have by imputation; the other in us, which consisteth of faith, hope, and charity, and other Christian virtues, God giveth us both the one justice and the other; the one by accepting us for righteous in Christ, the

other by working Christian righteousness in us." (Discourse of Justification,) 2. To the next opinion, that justifying faith, in the Christian sense, includes works of evangelical obedience, and is not, therefore, simple affiance or fiducial assent, the answer of Whitby is forcible:- "The Scripture is express and frequent in the assertion, that believers are justified by faith, in which expression either faith must include works, or evangelical obedience, or it doth not: if it doth not, we

are justified by faith alone; and that it doth not formally include works of evangelical righteousness appears, 1. From the plain distinction which the Scripture puts between them, when it informs us that faith works by love, is shown forth by our works, and exhorts us to add to our faith virtue, to virtue knowledge; and, 2. Because it is not reasonable to conceive, that Christ and his apostles, making use of a word which had a known and fixed import, should mean more by this word than what it signified in

common use, as sure they must have done, had they included in the meaning of the word the whole of our evangelical righteousness." (Preface to Galatians.) To this we may add, that in every discourse of St. Paul, as to our justification, faith and works are opposed to each other; and farther, that his argument necessarily excludes works of evangelical obedience. For as it clearly excludes all works of ceremonial law, so also all works of obedience to the moral law; and that not with any reference to their degree, as perfect of

imperfect, but with reference to their nature as works; so then, for this same reason must all works of evangelical obedience be excluded from the office of justifying, for they are also moral works, works of obedience to the same law, which is in force under the Gospel; and however they may be performed; whether by the assistance of the Spirit, or without that assistance; whether they spring from faith or any other principle, these are mere circumstances which alter not the nature of the acts themselves, they

are works still, and are opposed by the apostle to grace and faith. "And if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace; but if it be of works, then is it no more (of) grace, otherwise work is no more work," Rom. 11:6.

3. A third notion which has been adopted to guard the doctrine of justification by faith is, that faith apprehends and appropriates the merits of Christ to make up for the deficiency of our imperfect obedience. There must,

therefore, be a sincere endeavor after obedience, and in this the required guard is supposed to lie; but to secure justification where obedience is still imperfect though sincere, requires faith.

It is a sufficient refutation of this theory, that no intimation is given of it in Scripture, and it is indeed contradicted by it. Either this sincere and imperfect obedience has its share in our justification, or it has not; if it has, we are justified by works and faith united, which has just been

disproved; if it has not, then we are justified by faith alone, in the manner before explained.

4. The last error referred to is that which represents faith as, per se, the necessary root of obedience: so that justification by faith alone may be allowed; but then the guard against abuse is said to lie in this, that true faith is itself so eminent a virtue, that it naturally produces good works.

The objection to this statement lies not indeed so much to the substantial

truth of the doctrine taught by it, or to what is perhaps intended by most of those who so speak, for similar modes of expression we find in the writings of many of the elder divines of the reformation, who most strenuously advocated justification by faith alone; but to the view under which it is presented.

Faith, when genuine, is necessarily the "root and mother of obedience;" good works of every kind, without exception, do also necessarily spring from it;

but though we say necessarily, yet we do not say naturally. The error lies in considering faith in Christ as so eminently a virtue, so great an act of obedience, that it must always argue a converted and renewed state of mind wherever it exists, from which, therefore, obedience must flow, We have, however, seen that regeneration does not precede justification; that till justification man is under bondage, and that he does not "walk after the Spirit," until he is so "in Christ Jesus;" that to him

"there is now no condemnation;" yet faith, all acknowledge, must precede justification, and it cannot, therefore, presuppose a regenerate state of mind. The truth, then, is, that faith does not produce obedience by any virtue there is in it, per se; nor as it supposes a previous renewal of heart; but as it unites to Christ, gives us a personal interest in the covenant of God's mercy, and obtains for us, as an accomplished condition, our justification, from which flow the gift of the Holy Spirit, and the

regeneration of our nature. The strength of faith lies not, then, in what it is in itself, but in what it interests us in; it necessarily leads to good works, because it necessarily leads to justification, on which immediately follows our "new creation in Christ Jesus to good works, that we may walk in them."

There are yet a few theories on the subject of justification to be stated and examined, which, however, the principles already established will

enable us briefly to dismiss.

That of the Romish Church, which confounds sanctification with justification, has been already noticed. The influence of this theory may be traced in the writings of some leading divines of the English Church, who were not fully imbued with the doctrines of the reformers on this great point, such as Bishop Taylor, Archbishop Tillotson, and others, who make regeneration necessary to justification;

and also in many divines of the Calvinistic nonconformist class, who make regeneration, also, to precede justification, though not like the former, as a condition of it.

The source of this error appears to be twofold.

It arises, first, from a loose and general notion of the Scriptural doctrine of regeneration; and, secondly, from confounding that change which true evangelical repentance doubtless implies, with regeneration itself. A few observations

will dissipate these erroneous impressions.

As to those previous changes of mind and conduct, which they often argue from, as proving a new state of mind and character, they are far from marking that defined and unequivocal state of renovation, which our Lord expresses by the phrases "born again," and "born of the Spirit," and which St. Paul evidently explains by being "created anew," "a new creation;" "living after the Spirit," and "walking in the Spirit." In the

established order in which God effects this mighty renovation of a nature previously corrupt, in answer to prayers directed to him, with confidence in his promises to that effect in Christ Jesus, there must be a previous process, which divines have called by the expressive names of "awakening," and "conviction;" that is, the sleep of indifference to spiritual concerns is removed, and conviction of the sad facts of the case of a man who has hitherto lived in sin, and under the sole dominion of a carnal and

earthly mind, is fixed in the judgment and the conscience. From this arises an altered and a corrected view of things; apprehension of danger; desire of deliverance; abhorrence of the evils of the heart and the life; strong efforts for freedom, resisted however by the bondage of established habits and innate corruptions; and a still deeper sense, in consequence, of the need not only of pardon, but of that almighty and renewing influence which alone can effect the desired change. It

is in this state of mind, that the prayer becomes at once heartfelt and appropriate, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."

But all this is not regeneration; it is rather the effect of the full and painful discovery of the want of it; nor will "fruits meet for repentance-," the effects of an alarmed conscience, and of a corrected judgment; the efforts to be right, however imperfect; which are the signs, we also grant, of sincerity, prove more than

that the preparatory process is going on under the influence of the Holy Spirit. Others may endeavor to persuade a person in this state of mind that he is regenerate, but the absence of love to God as his reconciled Father; the evils which he detests having still, in many respects, the dominion over him; the resistance of his heart to the unaccustomed yoke, when the sharp pangs of his convictions do not, for the moment, arm him with new powers of contest; his pride; his remaining self

righteousness; his reluctance to be saved wholly as a sinner, whose repentance and all its Suits, however exact and copious, merit nothing; all assure him, that even should he often feel that he is "not far from the kingdom of God," he has not entered it; that his burden is not removed; that his bonds are not broken; that he is not "walking in the Spirit;" that he is at best but a struggling slave, not "the Lord's free man."

But there is a point which, when passed, changes the

scene. He believes wholly in Christ; he is justified by faith; he is comforted by the Spirit's "witnessing with his spirit," that he is now a child of God; he serves God from filial love; he has received new powers; the chain of his bondage is broken, and he is delivered; he walks not after the flesh, but after the Spirit; he is "dead to sin, and cannot continue longer therein;" and the fruits of the Spirit are in' him - "love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, meekness, faith, temperance." He is now,

and not till now, in a regenerate state, as that state is described in the Scriptures. Before he was a seeker, now he has obtained what he sought; and he obtains it concomitantly with justification.

Still indeed it may be said, that, call this previous state what you will, either regeneration or repentance, it is necessary to justification; and therefore, justification is not by faith alone. We answer, that we can-not call it a regenerated state, a

being "born of the Spirit," for the Scriptures do not so designate it; and it is clear, that the fruits of the Spirit do not belong to it; and, therefore, there is an absence, not of the work of the Spirit, for all has its origin there, but of that work of the Spirit by which we are "born again" strictly and properly. Nor is the connection of this preparatory process with justification of the same nature as that of faith with justification. It is necessary, it is true, as hearing the word is necessary, for "faith

cometh by hearing;" and it is necessary as leading to prayer, and to faith, for prayer is the language of discovered want, and faith in another, in the sense of trust, is the result of self diffidence, and self despair; but it is necessary remotely, not immediately. This distinction is clearly and accurately expressed by Mr.

Wesley. (Farther Appeal, &c.) "And yet I allow you this, that although both repentance and the fruits thereof, are, in some sense, necessary before

justification, yet neither the one nor the other is necessary in the same sense, nor in the same degree with faith. Not in the same degree; for in whatever moment a man believes, in the Christian sense of the word, he is justified; his sins are blotted out; his faith is counted to him for righteousness. But it is not so at whatever moment he repents, or brings forth any or all the fruits of repentance. Faith alone, therefore justifies, which repentance alone does not; much less any outward

work; and consequently none of these are necessary to justification in the same degree as faith. Nor in the same sense; for none of these has so direct and immediate relation to justification as faith. This is proximately necessary thereto; repentance and its fruits, remotely, as these are necessary to the increase and continuance of faith. And even in this sense, these are only necessary on supposition that there is time and opportunity for them; for in many instances there is not; but God cuts short his

work, and faith prevents the fruits of repentance. So that the general proposition is not overthrown, but clearly established by these concessions, and we conclude still, both on the authority of Scripture and the Church, that faith alone is the proximate condition of justification." (Sermons.) If regeneration, in the sense in which it is used in Scripture, and not loosely and vaguely, as by many divines, both ancient and modern, is then a concomitant of justification, it cannot be a

condition of it; and as we have shown, that all the change's which repentance implies, fall short of regeneration, repentance is not an evidence of a regenerate state; and thus the theory of justification by regeneration is untenable. A second theory, not indeed substantially different from the former, but put into different phrase, and more formally labored, is that of Bishop Bull, which gave rise to the celebrated controversy of his day, upon the publication of his Harmonia Apostolica; and

it is one which has left the deepest impress upon the views of the clergy of the English Church, and contributed more than any thing else to "obscure her true doctrine, as contained in her articles and homilies, on this leading point of experimental theology. This theory is professedly that of justification by works, with these qualifications, that the works are evangelical, or such as proceed from faith; that they are done by the assistance of the Spirit of God; and that such works are not meritorious,

but a necessary condition of justification. To establish this hypothesis, it was necessary to avoid the force of the words of St. Paul, and the learned prelate just mentioned, therefore, reverses the usual practice of commentators, which is to reconcile St. James to St. Paul on the doctrine of justification; and assuming that St. James speaks clearly and explicitly, and St. Paul, on this point, things "hard to be understood;" he interprets the latter by the former, and reconciles St, Paul to

St. James. According then to this opinion, St. James explicitly asserts the doctrine of justification of sinful men before God by the works which proceed from faith in Christ: St. Paul, therefore, when he denies that man can be justified by works, refers simply to works of obedience to the Mosaic law; and by the faith which justifies, he means the works which spring from faith. Thus the two apostles are harmonized by Bishop Bull.

The main pillar of this scheme is, that St. James teaches the doctrine of justification before God by works springing from faith in Christ; and as it is necessary in a discourse on justification, to ascertain the meaning of this apostle, in the passages referred to, both because his words may appear to form an objection to the doctrine of justification by faith alone, which we have established; and, also, on account of the misleading statements which are found in many of the attempts which have been made to reconcile the

two apostles, this may be a proper place for that inquiry; the result of which will show, that Bishop Bull and the divines of that school, have as greatly mistaken St. James as they have mistaken St. Paul.

We observe then, 1. That to interpret St. Paul by St. James, involves this manifest absurdity, that it is interpreting a writer who treats professedly, and in a set discourse, on the subject in question, the justification of a sinful man before God, by a writer who, if he could be allow-

ed to treat of that subject with the same design, does it but incidentally. This itself makes it clear, that the great axiomata, principles of this doctrine, must be first sought for in the writer who enters professedly, and by copious argument, into the inquiry.

But, 2. The two apostles do not engage in the same argument, and for this reason, that they are not addressing themselves to persons in the same circumstances. St. Paul addresses, the unbelieving Jews, who sought

justification by obedience to the law of Moses, moral and ceremonial; proves that all men are guilty, and that neither Jew nor Gentile can be justified by works of obedience to any law, and that therefore justification must be by faith alone. On the other hand, St. James, having to do, in his epistle with such as professed the Christian faith and justification by it, but erring dangerously about the nature of faith, affirming that faith, in the sense of opinion or mere belief of doctrine, would save them, though they

should remain destitute of a real change in the moral frame and constitution of their minds, and give no evidence of this in a holy life, it became necessary for him to plead the renovation of man's nature, and evangelical obedience, as the necessary fruits of real or living faith. The question discussed by St. Paul is, whether works would justify; that by St. James is, whether a dead faith, the mere faith of assent would save.

3. St. Paul and St. James do not use the term

justification in the same sense. The former uses it as we have seen, for the pardon of sin the accepting and treating as righteous one who is guilty but penitent. But, that St. James does not speak of this kind of justification is most evident, from his reference to the case of Abraham. "Was not Abraham, our father, justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?" Does St. James mean, that Abraham was then justified in the sense of being forgiven? Certainly not; for St. Paul,

when speaking of the justification of Abraham, in the sense of his forgiveness before God, by the imputation of his faith for righteousness, fixes, that event many years previously, even before Isaac was born, and when the promise of a seed was made to him; for it is added by Moses when he gives an account of this transaction, Gen. 15:6, "And he believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness."

If then, St. James speaks of the same kind of

justification, he contradicts St. Paul and Moses, by implying that Abraham was not pardoned and received into God's favor, until the offering of Isaac. If no one will maintain this, then the justification of Abraham, mentioned by St. James, it is plain, does not mean the forgiveness of his sins, and he uses the term in a different sense to St. Paul.

4. The only sense, then, in which St. James can take the term justification, when he says that Abraham was "justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his

son upon the altar," is, that his works manifested or proved that he was justified, proved that he was really justified by faith, or, in other words, that the faith by which he was justified, was not dead and inoperative, but living and active. This is abundantly confirmed by what follows. So far is St. James from denying that Abraham was justified by the imputation of his faith for righteousness, long before he offered up his son Isaac, that he expressly allows it by quoting the passage, Gen. 15:6, in which this is

said to have taken place at least twenty-five years before; and he makes use of his subsequent works in the argument, expressly to illustrate the vital and obedient nature of the faith by which he was at first justified. "Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was his faith made perfect, and the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, ' Abraham believed God,' (in a transaction twenty-five years previous,) 'and it was imputed to him for righteousness, and he was called the friend of God.'"

This quotation of James, from Gen. 15:6, demands special notice. "And the scripture," he says, "was fulfilled. which saith," &c. Whitby paraphrases, "was again fulfilled;"

some other commentators say it "was twice fulfilled," in the transaction of Isaac, and at the previous period to which the quotation refers. These comments are, however, hasty, darken the argument of St. James, and have, indeed, no discernible meaning at all. For do they mean that Abraham was twice

justified, in the sense of being twice pardoned; or that his justification was begun at one of the periods referred to, and finished twenty-five years afterward? These are absurdities; and if they will not maintain them, in what sense do they understand St. James to use the phrase," and the scripture was fulfilled?" The scripture alluded to by St. James is that given above, "and he believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness." When was the first fulfillment of this scripture,

of which they speak? It could not be in the transaction of Abraham's proper justification, through his faith in the promise respecting "his seed," as mentioned, Gen. 15:6, for that scripture is an historical narration of the fact of that, his justification. The fact, then, was not a fulfillment of that part of Scripture, but that part of Scripture a subsequent narration of the fact. The only fulfillment, consequently, that it had, was in the transaction adduced by St. James, the offering of

Isaac; but if Abraham had been, in the proper sense, justified then, that event could be no fulfillment, in their sense, of a scripture which is a narrative of what was done twenty-five years before, and which relates only to what God then did, namely, "count the faith of Abraham to him for righteousness." The only senses in which the term "fulfill" can be taken in this passage are, that of accomplishment, or that of illustration and establishment. The first cannot apply here, for the passage is neither typical

nor prophetic, and we are left, therefore, to the second; "and the scripture was fulfilled," illustrated, and confirmed, which saith, "Abraham believed in God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness." It was established and confirmed that he was, in truth, a man truly justified of God, and that the faith by which he was justified was living and operative.

5. As St. James does not use the term justification in the sense of the forgiveness of sin, when he speaks of

the justification of Abraham by works, so neither can he use it in this sense in the general conclusion which he draws from it; "Ye see, then, how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." The ground on which he rests this general inference is the declarative justification of Abraham, which resulted from his lofty act of obedience, in the case of Isaac, and which was eminently itself an act of obedient faith; and the justification of which he speaks in the general conclusion of the

argument, must, therefore, be taken in the same sense. He speaks not of the act of being justified before God, and the means by which it is effected; but of being proved to be in a manifest and Scripturally approved state of justification. "Ye see, then, that by works a man is" shown to be in a "justified" state; or how his profession of being in the Divine favor is justified and confirmed "by works, and not by faith only," or mere doctrinal faith; not by the faith of mere intellectual assent, not by the faith which is dead, and

unproductive of good works.

Lastly, so far are the two apostles from being in opposition to each other, that, as to faith as well as works, they most perfectly agree. St. James declares, that no man can be saved by mere faith.

But, then, by faith he means, not the same faith to which St. Paul attributes a saving efficacy. His argument sufficiently shows this. He speaks of a faith which is "alone" and "dead," St. Paul of the faith which is never alone,

though it alone justifieth; which is not solitaria, though it is sola in this work, as our old divines speak; the faith of a penitent, humbled man, who not only yields speculative assent to the scheme of Gospel doctrine, but flies with confidence to Christ, as his sacrifice and Redeemer, for pardon of sin and deliverance from it; the faith, in a word, which is a fruit of the Spirit, and that by which a true believer enters into and lives the spiritual life, because it vitally unites him to Christ, the fountain

of that life'- the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

There is then no foundation in the Epistle of St. James for the doctrine of justification by works, according to Bishop Bull's theory. The other arguments by which this notion has been supported, are refuted by the principles which have been already laid down, and confirmed from the word of God.

A third theory has, also, had great influence in the Church of England, and is to this day explicitly asserted by some of its leading divines and prelates. It acknowledges that, provided faith be understood to be sincere and genuine, men are justified by faith only, and in this they reject the opinion just examined; but then they take faith to be mere belief, assent to the truth of the Gospel, and nothing more. This is largely defended by Whitby in his preface to the Galatians, which, in other

respects ably shows that justification is in no sense by works, either natural, Mosaic, or evangelical. The faith by which we are justified, he describes to be "a full assent to, or firm persuasion of mind concerning the truth of what is testified by God himself respecting our Lord Jesus Christ," and in particular, "that he was Christ the Son of God." "This was the faith which the apostles required in order to baptism;" "by this faith men were put into the way of salvation, and if

they persevered in it, would obtain it."

Nearly the same view is taught by the present bishop of Winchester, in his Refutation of Calvinism, and his Elements of Theology, and it is, probably, the opinion of the great body of the national clergy, not distinguished as evangelical, though with many it is also much mingled with the scheme of Bishop Bull. "Faith and belief," says Bishop Tomline, "strictly speaking mean the same thing." If,

then, a penitent heathen or Jew, convinced that Jesus was the Messiah, the promised Savior of the world, "having understood that baptism was essential to the blessings of the new and merciful dispensation, of the Divine authority of which he was fully persuaded, would eagerly apply to some one of those who were commissioned to baptize; his baptism, administered according to the appointed form to a true believer, would convey justification; or in other words, the baptized person would receive remission of

his past sins, would be reconciled to God, and be accounted just and righteous in his sight." (Refutation of Calvinism, chap. iii.)

"Faith, therefore, including repentance for former offences, was, as far as the person himself was concerned, the sole requisite for justification; no previous work was enjoined; but baptism was invariably the instrument, or external form by which justification was conveyed." (Refutation of Calvinism, chap. iii.)

The confusedness and contrariety of this scheme will be obvious to the reader.

It will not be denied to Dr. Whitby, that the apostles baptized upon the profession of a belief in the Messiahship and Sonship of our Lord; nor is it denied to Bishop Tomline, that when baptism, in the case of true penitents, was not only an outward expression of the faith of assent; but accompanied by a solemn committal of the spiritual interests of the baptized to Christ, by an act of

confidence, the power to do which, was, no doubt, often given as a part of the grace of baptism, justification would follow; the real question is, whether justification follows mere assent. This is wholly contradicted by the argument of St. James; for if dead faith, by which he means mere assent to doctrine, is no evidence of a justified state, it cannot be justifying; which I take to be as conclusive an argument as possible. For St. James does not deny faith to him who has faith without works; if then he

has faith, the apostle can mean by faith nothing else certainly than assent or belief: "Thou believest there is one God, thou doest well;" and as this faith, according to him is "alone," by faith he means mere assent of the intellect. This argument shows, that those theologians are unquestionably in error, who make justification the result of mere assent to the evidence of the truth of the Gospel, or doctrinal belief. And neither Dr. Whitby nor Bishop Tomline are able to carry this doctrine throughout. The former

contends, that this assent, when firm and sincere, must produce obedience; but St. James denies neither firmness of conviction, nor sincerity to his inoperative faith) and yet, he tells us, that it remained "alone," and was "dead." Beside, if faith justifies only as it produces obedience, it does not justify alone, and the justifying efficacy lies in the virtual or actual obedience proceeding from it, which gives up Whitby's main position, and goes into the scheme of Bishop Bull. Equally inconsistent

is Bishop Tomline. He acknowledges that "belief, or faith, may exist, unaccompanied by any of the Christian graces;" and that "this faith does not justify." How then will he maintain that justification is by faith alone, in the sense of belief? Again he tells us, that the faith which is the means of salvation, "is that belief of the truth of the Gospel which produces obedience to its precepts, and is accompanied by a firm reliance upon the merits of Christ." Still farther, that "baptism is the instrument invariably by

which justification is conveyed." (Refutation of Calvinism, chap, iii.) Thus, then, we are first told, that justifying faith is belief or assent; then that various other things are connected with it to render it justifying, such as previous repentance, the power of producing obedience, reliance on the merits of Christ, and baptism! All this confusion and contradiction shows, that the doctrine of justification by faith alone, in the sense of belief or intellectual assent only, cannot be maintained, and that, in

order to avoid the Worse than Antinomian consequence, which would follow from the doctrine, its advocates are obliged so to explain, and qualify, and add, as to make many approaches to that true doc-trine against which they hurl both censure and ridicule.

The error of this whole scheme lies in not considering the essence of justifying faith to be trust or confidence in Christ as our sacrifice for sin, which, though Whitby and others of his school, have

attempted to ridicule by calling it "a leaning or rolling of ourselves upon him for salvation,"

availing themselves of the coarse terms used by scoffers, is yet most manifestly, as we have indeed already seen, the only sense in which faith can be rationally taken, when a sacrifice for sin, a means of reconciliation with God, is its object, and indeed when any promise of God is made to us. It is not surely that we may merely believe that the death of Christ is a sacrifice

for sin, that he is "set forth as a propitiation," but that we may trust in its efficacy; it is not that we may merely believe that God has made promises to us, that his merciful engagements in our favor are recorded; but that we may have confidence in them, and thus be supported by them.

This was the faith of the saints of the Old Testament. "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed, and he went out,

not knowing whither he went." His faith was confidence. "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in him." "Who is among you that feareth the Lord? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is." It is under this notion of trust that faith is continually represented to us also in the New Testament.

"In his name shall the Gentiles trust" "For therefore we both labor

and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, and especially of them that believe."

"For I know whom I have believed, (trusted,) and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." "If we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end."

The fourth theory which we may notice, is that which rejects justification in the present life, and defers its

administration to the last day. This has had a few, and but a few abettors, and the principal arguments for it are, 1. That all the consequences of sin are not removed from even believers in the present life, whereas a full remission of sin necessarily implies the full and immediate remission of punishment. 2. That if believers are justified, that is judged in the present life, they must be judged twice, whereas there is but one judgment, which is to take place at Christ's second coming. 3. That the Scriptures speak

of justification at the last day, as when our Lord declares "that every idle word that men shall speak they shall give an account thereof in the day of judgment," and adds, "by thy words thou shalt (then) be justified, and by thy words shalt thou be condemned."

To all these arguments, which a few words will refute, the general, and, indeed, sufficient answer is, that justification in the sense of the forgiveness of sins, the only import of the term in question, is

constantly and explicitly spoken of as a present attainment. This is declared to be the case with Abraham and with David, by St. Paul; it was surely the case with those to whom our Lord said, "thy sins be forgiven thee;" and with her of whom he declared, that having "much forgiven she loved much." "We have," says St. Paul, writing to the Colossians, "redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins." So plain a point needs no confirmation by more numerous quotations; and

the only means which the advocates of the theory have resorted to for explaining such passages consistently with their own views, is absurdly, and we may add audaciously, to resolve them into a figure of speech which speaks of a future thing when certain, as present; a mode of interpretation which sets all criticism at defiance.

As to the first argument, we may observe that it assumes, that it is essential to the pardon of sin, that all its consequences should be immediately removed,

or otherwise they assert it is no pardon at all This is to affirm, that to be freed from punishment in another life, and finally, and indeed in a short time, to be freed from the afflictions of this is not a pardon; which no one can surely deliberately affirm. This notion, also, loses sight entirely of the obviously wise ends which are answered by postponing the removal of affliction and diseases from those who are admitted into the Divine favor, till another life; and of the sanctification of all these to

their benefit, so that they entirely lose, when they are not the consequence of new offences, their penal character, and become parts of a merciful discipline, "working together for good."

The second argument assumes, that because there is but one general judgment, there can be no acts of judgment which are private and personal. But the one is in no sense contrary to the other.

Justification may, therefore, be allowed to be a judicial proceeding under

a merciful constitution, as before explained, and yet offer no obstruction to a general, public, and final judgment. The latter indeed grows out of the former; for since this offer of mercy is made to all men by the Gospel, they are accountable for the acceptance or refusal of it, which it is a part of the general judgment to exhibit, that the righteousness of God, in the punishment of them "that believe not the Gospel," may be demonstrated and the ground of the salvation of

those who have been sinners, as well as the rest of mankind, may be declared. We may also farther observe, that so far is the appointment of one general judgment from interfering with acts of judgment in the proceedings of the Most High as the governor of men, that he is constantly judging men, both as individuals and nations, and distributing to them both rewards and punishments.

The argument from the justification of men at the

last day, proceeds, also, upon a false assumption. It takes justification then and now for the same act; and it supposes it to proceed upon the same principle; neither of which is true.

1. It is not true that it is the same act. The justification of believers in this life, is the remission of sins; but where are we taught that remission of sins is to be attained in the day of judgment?

Plainly nowhere, and the whole doctrine of Scripture is in opposition to this notion, for it confines our

preparation for judgment to the present life only. When our Lord says, "by thy words thou shalt be justified," he does not mean "by thy words thy sins shall be forgiven;" and if this is not maintained the passage is of no force in the argument.

2. Justification at the last day, does not proceed upon the same principle, and, therefore, is not to be concluded to be the continuance of the same act, commenced on earth. Justification at the last day is, on all hands, allowed to

be by works; but, if that justification mean the pardon of sin, then the pardon of sin is by works and not by faith, a doctrine we have already refuted from the clear evidence of Scripture itself. The justification of the last day is, therefore, not the pardon of sin; for if our sins are previously pardoned, we then need no pardon; if they are not pardoned, no provision for their remission then remains. And as this justification is not pardon, neither is it acquittal; for, as to those sins of which

the wicked have not been guilty, they will not be acquitted of them, because an all wise God will not charge them with those of which they have not been guilty, and there can be no acquittal as to those they have committed. Believers will not be acquitted of the sins for which they have obtained forgiveness, because they will not be charged upon them: "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." So far from their being arraigned as sinners, that their justification on earth may

be formally pleaded for their acquittal at the last day, that the very circumstances of the judgment will be a public recognition, from its very commencement, of their pardon and acceptance upon earth. "The dead in Christ shall rise first." "They rise to glory, not to shame," their bodies being made like unto Christ's "glorious body." Those that sleep in Christ shall "God bring with him," in his train of triumph; they shall be set on his "right hand," in token of acceptance and favor; and of the books

which shall be opened, one is "the book of life," in which their names have been previously recorded. It follows, then, that our justification at the last day, if we must still use that phrase, which has little to support it in Scripture, and might be well substituted for others le ss equivocal, can only be declarative, approbatory, and remunerative. Declarative, as recognizing, in the manner just stated, the justification of believers on earth; approbatory of their works of faith and love; and remunerative of them,

as made graciously rewardable, in their different measures, by the evangelical constitution.

And here it may not be amiss to notice an argument against the doc trine of justification by faith alone, and in favor of justification by faith and works, which is drawn from the proceedings of the last day:- "If works wrought through faith are the ground of the sentence passed upon us in that day, then they are a necessary condition of our justification." This is an

argument which has been built much upon, from Bishop Bull to the present day. Its fallacy lies in considering the works of believers as the only, or chief ground of that sentence; that is, the administration of eternal life to them in its different degrees of glory at the coming of Christ. That it is not so, is plain from those express passages of Scripture, which represent eternal life as the fruit of Christ's atonement, and the gift of God through him. "By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not

of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works," &c. "Why," says an old writer, "might he not have said, by grace are ye saved, through faith and works; it were as easy to say the one as the other." (9) If our works are the sole ground of that sentence of eternal life, then is the reward of righteousness of debt according to the law of works, and not of grace; but if of grace, then works are not the sole or chief ground of our final reward. If of debt, we claim in our own right; and the works rewarded must be in every

sense our own; but good works are not our own works; we are

"created in Christ Jesus unto good works;" and derive all the power to do them from him. If, then, we have not the right of reward in ourselves, we have it in another; and thus we again come to another and higher ground of the final sentence than the works wrought even by them that believe, namely, the covenant right which we derive from Christ-right grounded on promise. If then it is asked, in what

sense good works are any ground at all of the final sentence of eternal life, we answer, they are so secondarily and subordinately, 1. As evidences of that faith and that justified state from which alone truly good works can spring. 2. As qualifying us for heaven; they and the principles from which they spring constituting our holiness, our "meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light." 3. As rewardable; but still of grace not of debt, of promise not of our own right, since after all we

have done, though we had lived and suffered as the apostles to whom the words were first addressed, we are commanded to confess ourselves "unprofitable servants." In this sense good works, though they have no part in the office of justifying the ungodly, that is, in obtaining forgiveness of sin, are necessary to salvation, though they are not the ground of it. As they are pleasing to God, so are they approved and rewarded by God. "They prevent future guilt, but take away no former guilt,

evidence our faith and title to everlasting glory, strengthen our union with Christ because they strengthen faith, confirm our hope, glorify God, give good example to men, make us more capable of communion with God, give some content to our consciences, and there is happiness in the doing of them, and in the remembrance of them when done. Blessed are they who always abound in them, for they know that their labor is not in vain in the Lord. Yet Bellarmin, though a great advancer of

merit, thought it the safest way to put our sole trust not in these good works, but in Christ, It is, indeed, not only the safest, but the only way so to do, if we would be justified before God. True, we shall be judged according to our works, but it doth not follow that we shall be justified by our works. God did never ordain good works, which are the fruits of a sincere faith in Christ, to acquire a right unto the remission of sin and eternal life; but to be a means by which we may obtain possession of the

rewards he hath proraised." (Lawson's Theo-Politica.)

(9) The reader will also recollect Rom. 6:23, "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ." The following passages expressly make the atonement of Christ the ground of our title to eternal life. "By his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." "He is the Mediator of the New

Testament, that, by means of death, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance," Heb. 9:12-15. "Christ died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him," 1 Thess. 5:10.

The last theory of justification to which it is necessary to advert, is that comprised in the scheme of Dr. Taylor, of Norwich, in his Key to the Apostolic Writings. It is, that all such phrases as to elect, call, adopt, justify, sanctify, &c, are to be taken to express

that Church relation into which, by the destruction of the Jewish polity, believing Jews and Gentiles were brought; that they are

"antecedent blessings," enjoyed by all professed Christians, though, unless they avail themselves of these privileges for the purposes of personal holiness, they cannot be saved.

This scheme is, in many respects, delusive and absurd, as it con-founds collective privileges with those attainments which from their nature can only

be personal. If we allow that with respect to "election," for instance, it may have a plausibility, because nations of men may be elected to peculiar privileges of a religious kind; yet with respect to the others, as "justification," &c, the notion requires no lengthened refutation. Justification is, as the Apostle Paul states it, pardon of sin; but are the sins of nations pardoned, because they are professedly Christian? This is a personal attainment,

and can be no other, and collective justification, by Church privileges, is a wild dream, which mocks and trifles with the Scriptures. According to this scheme, there is a Scriptural sense in which the most profane and immoral man, provided he profess himself a Christian, may be said to be justified, that is, pardoned; sanctified, that is, made holy; and adopted, that is made a child of God!

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44 BENEFITS DERIVED TO MAN FROM THE ATONEMENT - CONCOMITANTS OF JUSTIFICATION

The leading blessings concomitant with justification, are Regeneration and ADOPTION; with respect to which we may observe generally, that although we must distinguish them as being different from each other, and from justification, yet they are not to be separated. They occur at the same time, and

they all enter into the experience of the same person; so that no man is justified without being regenerated and adopted, and no man is regenerated and made a son of God, who is not justified. Whenever they are mentioned in Scripture, they, therefore, involve and imply each other; a remark which may preserve us from some errors. Thus, with respect to our heirship, and consequent title to eternal life, in Titus 3:7, it is grounded upon our justification.

"For we are justified by his grace, that we should be heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

In 1 Pet. 1:3, it is connected with our regeneration. "Blessed be God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who of his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto an inheritance," &c. Again, in Rom. 8:17, it is grounded upon our adoption - "If children, then heirs." These passages are a sufficient

proof, that justification, regeneration, and adoption, are not distinct and different titles, but constitute one and the same title, through the gift of God in Christ, to the heavenly inheritance. They are attained, too, by the same faith. We are "justified by faith;" and we are the "children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." Accordingly, in the following passages, they are all united as the effect of the same act of faith. "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God,

(which appellation includes reconciliation and adoption,) even to them that believe on his name, which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," or, in other words, were regenerated.

The observations which have been made on the subject, in the pre-ceding chapter, will render it the less necessary to dwell here at length upon the nature and extent of regeneration.

It is that mighty change in man, wrought by the Holy

Spirit, by which the dominion which sin has over him in his natural state, and which he deplores and struggles against in his penitent state, is broken and abolished, so that, with full choice of will and the energy of right affections, he serves God freely, and "runs in the way of his commandments."

"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." "For sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not

under the law, but under grace."

"But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." Deliverance from the bondage of sin, and the power and the will to do all things which are pleasing to God, both as to inward habits and outward acts, are, therefore, the distinctive characters of this state.

That repentance is not regeneration, we have before observed. It will not

bear disputing whether regeneration begins with repentance; for if the regenerate state is only entered upon at our justification, then all that can be meant by this, to be consistent with the Scriptures, is, that the preparatory process, which leads to regeneration, as it leads to pardon, commences with conviction and contrition, and goes on to a repentant turning to the Lord. In the order which God has established, regeneration does not take place without this process. Conviction of

the evil and danger of an unregenerate state must first be felt. God hath appointed this change to be effected in answer to our prayers; and acceptable prayer supposes that we desire the blessing we ask; that we accept of Christ as the appointed medium of access to God; that we feel and confess our own inability to attain what we ask from another; and that we exercise faith in the promises of God which convey the good we seek. It is clear that none of these is regeneration, for they all suppose it to be a good in

prospect, the object of prayer and eager desire. True it is, that deep and serious conviction for sin, the power to desire deliverance from it, the power to pray, the struggle against the corruptions of an unregenerate heart, are all proofs of a work of God in the heart, and of an important moral change; but it is not this change, because regeneration is that renewal of our nature which gives us dominion over sin, and enables us to serve God, from love, and not merely from fear, and it is yet confessedly

unattained, being still the object of search and eager desire.

We are not yet "created anew unto good works," which is as special and instant a work of God as justification, and for this reason, that it is not attained before the pardon of our sins, and always accompanies it.

This last point may be proved,

1. From the nature of justification itself, which takes away the penalty of sin; but that penalty is not

only obligation to punishment, but the loss of the sanctifying Spirit, and the curse of being left under the slavery of sin, and under the dominion of Satan. Regeneration is effected by this Spirit restored to us, and is a consequence of our pardon; for though justification in itself is the remission of sin, yet a justified state implies a change, both in our condition and in our disposition: in our condition, as we are in a state of life, not of death, of safety, not of

condemnation; in our disposition, as regenerate and new creatures.

2. From Scripture, which affords us direct proof that regeneration is a concomitant of justification, "If any man be in christ, he is a new creature." It is then the result of our entrance into that state in which we are said to be in CHRIST; and the meaning of this phrase is most satisfactorily explained by Rom. 8:1, considered in connection with the preceding chapter, from which, in the division

of the chapters, it ought not to have been separated. That chapter clearly describes the state of a person convinced and slain by the law applied by the spirit. We may discover indeed, in this description, certain moral changes, as consenting to the law that it is good; delighting in it after the inward man; powerful desires; humble confession, &c. The state represented is, however, in fact, one of guilt, spiritual captivity, helplessness, and misery; a state of condemnation; and a state of bondage to sin. The

opposite condition is that of a man "in christ JESUS;" to him. "there is no condemnation;" he is forgiven; the bondage to sin is broken; he

"walks not after the flesh, but after the spirit." To be in christ, is, therefore, to be justified, and regeneration instantly follows. We see then the order of the Divine operation in individual experience: conviction of sin, helplessness and danger; faith; justification; and regeneration. The regenerate state is, also,

called in Scripture sanctification; though a distinction is made by the Apostle Paul between that and being "sanctified wholly," a doctrine to be afterward considered.

In this regenerate, or sanctified state, the former corruptions of the heart may remain, and strive for the mastery; but that which characterizes and distinguishes it from the state of a penitent before justification, before he is "in Christ," is, that they are not even his inward habit; and that they have no

dominion. Faith unites to Christ; by it we derive "grace and peace from God the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ," and enjoy "the communion of the Holy Ghost;" and this Spirit, as the sanctifying Spirit, is given to us to "abide with us, and to be in us," and then we walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit.

Adoption is the second concomitant of justification, and is a large and comprehensive blessing.

To suppose that the apostles take this term from the practice of the Greeks, Romans, and other nations who had the custom of adopting the children of others, and investing them with all the privileges of their natural offspring, is, probably, a refinement. It is much more likely that they had simply in view the obvious fact, that our sins had deprived us of our sonship, the favor of God, and our right to the inheritance of eternal life; that we had become strangers, and aliens, and enemies; and

that, upon our return to God, and reconciliation with him, our forfeited privileges were not only restored, but heightened through the paternal love of God. They could scarcely be forgetful of the affecting parable of the prodigal son; and it is under the same simple view that St. Paul quotes from the Old Testament, "wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and

daughters, saith the Lord almighty."

Adoption, then, is that act by which we who were alienated, and enemies, and disinherited, are made the sons of God, and heirs of his eternal glory. "If children then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ;" where it is to be remarked, that it is not in our own right, nor in right' of any work done in us or which we ourselves do, though it be an evangelical work, that we become heirs, but jointly with him, and in his right.

To this state belong freedom from a servile spirit; we are not servants but sons; the special love and care of God our heavenly Father; a filial confidence in him; free access to him at all times and in all circumstances; the title to the heavenly inheritance; and the Spirit of adoption, or the witness of the Holy Spirit to our adoption, which is the foundation of all the comfort we can derive from those privileges, as it is the only means by which we can know that they are ours.

The point stated last requires to be explained more largely, and the more so as it has often been derided as enthusiastic, and often timidly explained away by those whose opinions are in the main correct.

The doctrine is, the inward witness or testimony of the Holy Spirit, to the adoption or sonship of believers, from which flows a comfortable persuasion or conviction of our present acceptance with God, and the hope of our future and eternal glory.

This is taught in several passages of Scripture.

Rom. 8:15, 16, "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." In this passage it is to be remarked, 1. That the gift of the Spirit spoken of, takes away "fear" being opposed to the personified spirit of the law, or rather, perhaps, to the Holy Spirit in his convincing agency,

called the spirit of bondage, producing "fear," a servile dread of God as offended. 2. That the "Spirit of God" here mentioned, is not the personified spirit or genius of the Gospel, as some would have it, but "the Spirit itself" or himself, and hence called in the Galatians, in the text adduced below, "The Spirit of his Son," which cannot mean the genius of the Gospel. 3. That he inspires a filial confidence in "God as our Father, which is opposed to "the fear" produced by the "spirit of bondage." 4. That he

produces this filial confidence, and enables us to call God our Father, by witnessing, bearing testimony with our spirit, "that we are the children of God"

Gal. 4:4, 5, 6, "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons; and because ye are sons God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into

your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."

Here, also, are to be noted, 1. The means of our redemption from under (the curse of) the law, the incarnation and sufferings of Christ. 2. That the adoption of sons follows upon our actual redemption from that curse, or, in other words, our pardon. 3. That upon our pardon, the "Spirit of his Son" is "sent forth" and that "into our hearts," producing the same effect as that mentioned in the Epistle to the Romans,

filial confidence in God, - "crying, Abba, Father" To these are to be added all those passages, so numerous in the New Testament, which express the confidence and the joy of Christians; their friendship with God; their confident access to him as their God; their entire union, and delightful intercourse with him in spirit.

This doctrine has been generally termed the doctrine of assurance, and, perhaps the expressions of St. Paul, - "the full

assurance of faith," and "the full assurance of hope," may warrant the use of the word. But as there is a current and generally understood sense of this term among persons of the Calvinistic persuasion, implying, that the assurance of our present acceptance and sonship, is an assurance of our final perseverance, and of our indefeasible title to heaven: the phrase, a comfortable persuasion, or conviction of our justification and adoption, arising out of the Spirit's inward and direct testimony, is to be

preferred; for this has been held as an indubitable doctrine of Holy Writ by Christians, who by no means receive the doctrine of assurance in the sense held by the followers of Calvin.

There is, also, another reason for the sparing and cautious use of the term assurance, which is, that it seems to imply, though not necessarily, the absence of all doubt, and shuts out all those lower degrees of persuasion which may exist in the experience of Christians. For, as our

faith, may not at first, or at all times, be equally strong, the testimony of the Spirit may have its degrees of strength, and our persuasion or conviction be proportionately regulated. Yet, if faith be genuine, God respects its weaker exercises, and encourages its growth, by affording measures of comfort, and degrees of this testimony, Nevertheless, while this is allowed, the fullness of this attainment is to be pressed upon every one that believes, according to the word of God:- "Let us draw near," says St. Paul to all

Christians, "with full assurance of faith."

It may serve, also, to remove an objection sometimes made to the doctrine, and to correct an error which sometimes pervades the statement of it, to observe that this assurance, persuasion, or conviction, whichever term be adopted, is not of the essence of justifying faith; that is, that justifying faith does not consist in the assurance that I am now forgiven, through Christ. This would be obviously contradictory. For we must

believe before we can be justified; much more before we can be assured, in any degree, that we are justified; and this persuasion, therefore, follows justification; and is one of its results. We believe in order to justification; but we cannot be persuaded of our forgiveness in order to it, for the persuasion would be false. But though we must not only distinguish, but separate this persuasion of our acceptance from the faith which justifies, we must not separate but only

distinguish it from justification itself. With that come as concomitants, regeneration, adoption, and as far as we have any information from Scripture, the

"Spirit of adoption," though, as in all other cases, in various degrees of operation.

On the subject of this testimony of the Holy Spirit there are four opinions, The first is, that it is twofold; a direct testimony to, or "inward impression on the soul, whereby the Spirit of God

witnesses to my spirit that I am a child of God; that Christ hath loved me, and given himself for me, that I, even I, am reconciled to God;" (Wesley's Sermons;) and an indirect testimony, arising from the work of the Spirit in the heart and life, which St. Paul calls the testimony of our own spirits; for this is inferred from his expression, And the Spirit itself beareth witness - with our spirit," &c. This testimony of our own spirit, or indirect testimony of the Holy Spirit by and through our own spirit, is considered as

confirmatory of the first testimony, and is thus explained by the same writer:- "How am I assured that I do not mistake the voice of the Spirit 1 even by the testimony of my own spirit, 'by the answer of a good conscience toward God:' hereby you shall know that you are in no delusion, that you have not deceived your own soul. The immediate fruits of the Spirit ruling in the heart, are love, joy, peace; bowels of mercies, humbleness of mind, meekness, gentleness, long suffering. And the outward fruits are,

the doing good to all men, and a uniform obedience to all the commands of God."

The second opinion acknowledges, also, a twofold witness; the witness of the Spirit, which consists in the moral effects produced in him that believes, otherwise called the fruits of the Spirit; and the witness of our own spirits, that is, the consciousness of possessing faith. This they call "the reflex act of faith, by which a person, conscious of believing, reasons in this manner, I

know that I believe in Christ, therefore I know that I shall obtain everlasting life." (Dr. Hill's Lectures.)

The third opinion is, that there is but one witness, the Holy Spirit, acting concurrently with our own spirits. "The Spirit of God produces those graces in us which are the evidence of our adoption; it is he who, as occasion requires, illuminates our understandings and assists our memories in discovering and recollecting those

arguments of hope and comfort within ourselves.

But God's Spirit doth witness with, not without our spirits and understandings; in making use of our reason in considering and reflecting upon those grounds of comfort, which the Spirit of God hath wrought in us, and from them drawing this comfortable conclusion to ourselves, that 'we are the sons of God.'" (Bishop Bull.) With this notion is generally connected, that of the entire imperceptibility of

the Spirit's operations as distinguished from the operations of our own mind,

"so that we could never have known, unless it had been communicated to us by Divine revelation, that our souls are moved by a Divine power, when we love God and keep his commandments." (Mant and D'Oyley's Commentary.)

The following passage from the Rev. Thomas Scott's Commentary agrees with Bishop Bull in making the witness of the Spirit

mediate through our own spirit; and differs chiefly in phraseology. It may be taken as the view of a great part of those called the evangelical clergy of the present day. "The Holy Spirit, by producing in believers the tempers and affections of children, as described in the Scriptures, most manifestly attests their adoption into God's family.

This is not done by any voice, immediate revelation, or impulse, or merely by any text brought to the mind, (for all these

are equivocal and delusory,) but by coinciding with the testimony of their own consciences, as to their uprightness in embracing the Gospel, and giving themselves up to the service of God. So that, while they are examining themselves as to the reality of their conversion, and find Scriptural evidence of it, the Holy Spirit, from time to time shines upon his own work, excites their holy affections into lively exercise, renders them very efficacious upon their conduct, and thus puts the

matter beyond doubt; for while they feel the spirit of dutiful children toward God, they become satisfied concerning his paternal love to them."

A fourth opinion allows the direct witness of the Spirit, as stated above; but considers it only the special privilege of a few favored persons; of which notion it is a sufficient refutation, that the apostle, in the texts before quoted, speaks generally of believers, and restrains not the attainment from any who seek it. He places it in this

respect on the ground of all other blessings of the new covenant.

Of the four opinions just adduced, the first only appears to express the true sense of the word of God; but that the subject may be fully exhibited, we may observe, 1. That by all sober divines it is allowed, that some comfortable persuasions, or, at least, hope of the Divine favor, is attainable by true Christians, and is actually possessed by them, except under the influence of bodily infirmities, and in

peculiar seasons of temptation, and that all true faith is, in some degree, (though to what extent they differ,) personal and appropriating.

"The third part of repentance is faith, whereby we do apprehend and take hold upon the promises of God, touching the free pardon and forgiveness of our sins; which promises are sealed up unto us, with the death and blood shedding of his Son Jesus Christ. For what should it avail and profit us

to be sorry for our sins, to lament and bewail that we have offended our most bounteous and merciful Father, or to confess and acknowledge our offences and trespasses, though it be done never so earnestly, unless we do steadfastly believe, and be fully persuaded, that God, for his Son Jesus Christ's sake, will forgive us all our sins, and put them out of remembrance and from his sight? Therefore, they that teach repentance without a lively faith in our Savior Jesus Christ, do teach none other but Judas's

repentance." (Homily on Repentance.)

"Faith is not merely a speculative but a practical acknowledgment of Jesus as the Christ, - an effort and motion of the mind toward God; when the sinner, convinced of sin, accepts with thankfulness the proffered terms of pardon, and in humble confidence applying individually to himself the benefit of the general atonement, in the elevated language of a venerable father of the Church, drinks of the stream which

flows from the Redeemer's side. The effect is, that in a little, he is filled with that perfect-love of God which casteth out fear, - he cleaves to God with the entire affection of the soul." (Bishop Horsley.)

"It is the property of saving faith, that it hath a force to appropriate, and make Christ our own, Without this, a general remote belief would have been cold comfort. `He loved me, and gave himself for me,' saith St. Paul. What saith St. Chrysostom? ' Did Christ die only for St. Paul? No;

non excludit, sed appropriat;' he excludes not others, but he will secure himself." (Bishop Brownrigg.)

2. By those who admit, that upon previous contrition and faith in Christ, an act of justification takes place, by which we are reconciled to God, and adopted into his family, a doctrine which has been Scripturally established; it must also be admitted, that this act of mercy on the part of God is entirely kept secret from us, or that, by some means,' it is made

knowable by us. If the former, there is no remedy at all for doubt, and fear, and tormenting anticipation, which must be great, in proportion as our repentance is deep and genuine; and so there can be no comfort, no, freedom, no cheerfulness of spirit in religion, which contradicts the sentiments of all Churches, and all their leading theologians. What is still more important, it contradicts the Scriptures.

To all true believers, the Almighty is represented as

the "God of peace and consolation;" as "a Father;" as "dwelling in them and walking in them." Nay, there is a marked distinction between the assurances of grace and favor made to penitents, and to believers. The declarations as to the former are highly consolatory; but they constantly refer to some future good designed for them by the God before whom they humble themselves, for the encouragement of their seeking prayers, and their efforts of trust. "To that

man will I look, (a Hebraism for showing favor,) saith the Lord, who is poor, and of a contrite spirit." The "weary and heavy laden" are invited to Christ, that he may "give rest unto their souls." The apostles exhorted men to repent and be baptized, in order to the remission of sins. But to all who, in the Christian sense, are believers, or who have the faith by which we are justified, the language is much higher, "We have peace with God." "We joy in God by whom we have received the atonement."

They are exhorted "to rejoice in the Lord always." "The spirit of bondage" is exchanged for "the Spirit of adoption." They are

"Christ's." They are "children, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ," They "rejoice in hope of the glory of God." They are "always confident, knowing, that while at home in the body, they are absent from the Lord, but that when absent from the body, they shall be present with the Lord."

3. If then we come to know that this great act of

forgiveness has taken place in our favor; that it is vouchsafed to us in particular, and know this with that degree of conviction, which lays a sufficient ground of comfort and joy, the simple question is, by what means the knowledge of this is attained by us? The general promise of pardon alone is, in all the schemes just stated, acknowledged to be insufficient for this purpose; for since that promise is suspended upon conditions, they all profess to explain the means by which we may conclude

that we are actually and personally interested in the benefit of the general promise, the conditions being on our part personally fulfilled. The first opinion attributes this to a double testimony, a direct one of the Holy Spirit to our minds, and an indirect one of the same Spirit, through our own minds, and founded upon his moral work in them: or, what is the same thing, the testimony of our own spirit. This twofold testimony we think clearly established by the texts above quoted. For the first,

"the Spirit itself," and the "Spirit of his Son," is manifestly the Spirit of God: his office is to give testimony, and the object of the testimony is to declare that we are the sons of God. When also the apostle in Romans 8:16, says that this Spirit bears witness "with" our spirit, he makes our own minds witnesses with him to the same fact, though in a different manner. For though some writers will have the compound to be used here for the simple form of the verb, and render it "to witness to our

spirit;" and instances of this use of the compound verb do occur in the New Testament; yet it agrees both with the literal rendering of the word, and with other passages to conjoin this testimony of the Holy Spirit with those confirmatory proofs of our adoption which arise from his work within us, and which may, upon examination of our state, be called the testimony of our own mind or conscience. To this testimony the Apostle Paul refers in the same chapter, "They that are after the

Spirit, (do mind) the things of the Spirit." "But ye are not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of Christ dwell in you: now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his; for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." And again, in Galatians, "But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law."

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy," &c.

4. Two witnesses, and a twofold testimony is then sufficiently established; but

the main consideration is, whether the Holy Spirit gives his testimony directly to the mind, by impression, suggestion, or by whatever other term it may be called, or mediately by our own spirits, in some such way as is described by Bishop Bull in the extract above given; by "illuminating our understandings and assisting our memories in discussing and recollecting those arguments of hope and comfort within ourselves," which arise from "the graces which he has produced in us;"

or, as it is expressed by Mr. Scott, by "shining upon his own work, exciting their affections into lively exercise, rendering them very efficacious upon their conduct," and "thus puts the matter beyond doubt, for while they feel the spirit of dutiful children toward God, they become satisfied concerning his paternal love to them." To this statement of the doctrine we object, that it makes the testimony of the Holy Spirit in point of fact but the testimony of our own spirit; and by holding but one witness contradicts St.

Paul, who, as we have seen, holds too. For the testimony is that of our own consciousness of certain moral changes which have taken place; no other is admitted; and therefore it is but one testimony. Nor is the Holy Spirit brought in at all, except to qualify our own spirit to give witness by assisting its "discernment and memory," according to Bishop Bull, and by "shining upon his own work," according to Mr. Scott; and so there is but one witness, and that ourselves: for though

another may assist a witness to prepare and arrange his evidence, there is still but one deposition, and but one deposer. This is made still stronger, since it is supposed by both these writers, that there is no impression or revelation from the Spirit of the fact of our adoption, and that he does not in any way which we may distinguish from the operation of our own minds, assist us to prepare this evidence; for if this assistance, or shining upon his own work, could be ascertained to be from him distinctly, and with

intention to assure us from these moral changes that we are adopted into the family of God, then an immediate collateral impression or revelation would be supposed, which both reject. It follows, therefore, that we have no other ground to conclude those "graces and virtues" which we; discern in ourselves to be the work of the Spirit, than the general one, that all good in man is of his production, and our repentance and contrition might as well, on this general ground, be concluded to be the

evidence of pardon, although they arise from our consciousness of guilt, and our need of pardon. The argument of this opinion, simply and in fact, is, that the Holy Spirit works moral changes in the heart, and that these are the evidence of our sonship. It goes not beyond this; the Holy Spirit is not excluded by this opinion as the source of good in man, he is not excluded as qualifying our minds to adduce evidence as to certain changes being wrought within us; but he is excluded as a witness,

although he is said so explicitly by the apostle to give witness to the fact, not of a moral change, but of our adoption.

5. But farther, suppose our minds to be so assisted by the Holy Spirit as to discern the reality of his work in us; and in an investigation, whether we are or are not accepted of God, pardoned by his mercy, and adopted into his family, we depose this as the evidence of it; to what degree must this work of the Spirit in us have advanced before it can be

evidence of this fact? We have seen that it were absurd to allege contrition, and penitence, and fear, as the proofs of our pardon, since they suppose, that we are still under condemnation; what farther work of the Spirit, then, is the proof? The reply to this usually is, that though repentance should not be evidence of pardon, yet, when faith is added, this becomes evidence, since God has declared in his word, that we are

"justified by faith," and "whosoever believeth shall be saved."

To this we reply, that though we should become conscious of both repentance and faith, either by

"a reflex act of our own minds," or by the assistance of the Spirit "shining upon his own work,"

this would be no evidence of our forgiveness; our spirit would, in that case, witness the fact of our repenting and believing,

but that would be no witness to the fact of our adoption.

Justification is an act of God; it is secret and invisible; it passes in his own mind; it is declared by no outward sign; and no one can know, except the Holy Spirit, who knows the mind of God, whether we are pardoned or not, unless it had been stated in his word, that in every case pardon is dispensed when repentance and faith have reached some definite degree, clearly pointed out, so that we cannot fail to

ascertain that they have reached that degree; and, also, unless we were expressly authorized to be ourselves the judges of this case, and confidently and comfortably to conclude our justification. For it is not enough that we have faith. Faith, both as assent and confidence, has every possible degree; it is capable of mixture with doubt, and self dependence; nor without some definite and particular characters being assigned to justifying faith, could we ever, with any confidence, conclude as to

our own. But we have no such particular description of faith: nor are we authorized, any where, to make ourselves the judges of the fact, whether the act of pardon, as to us, has passed the mind of God. The apostle, in the passages quoted above, has assigned that office to the Holy Spirit; but it is in no part of Scripture appointed to us.

If, then, we have no authority from God to conclude that we are pardoned when faith, in an uncertain degree, is added

to repentance, the whole becomes a matter of inference; and we argue, that having "repentance and faith," we are forgiven; in other words, that these are the sufficient evidences of pardon. But repentance and faith are exercised in order to pardon; that must, therefore, be subsequent to both, and they cannot, for that reason, be the evidence of it, or the evidence of pardon might be enjoyed before pardon is actually received, which is absurd. But it has been said, "that we have the testimony of God in his

word, that when repentance and faith exist, God has infallibly connected pardon with them from the moment they are perceived to exist, and so it may be surely inferred from them." The answer is, that we have no such testimony. We have, through the mercy of God, the promise of pardon to all who repent and believe; but repentance is not pardon, and faith is not pardon, but they are its prerequisites; each is a sine que non, but surely not the pardon itself nor, as we have just seen, can either

be considered the evidence of pardon, without an absurdity. They are means to that end; but nothing more: and though God has "infallibly connected" the blessing of pardon with repentance and faith, he has not connected it with any kind of repentance, nor with any kind of faith; nor with every degree of repentance, nor with every degree of faith. How then shall we ever know, whether our repentance and faith are accepted unless pardon actually follow them? And as this pardon cannot be attested

by them, for the reason above given, and must, therefore, have an attestation of higher authority, and of a distinct kind, the only attestation conceivable which remains, is the direct witness of the Holy Spirit. Either this must be acknowledged, or a painful uncertainty as to the genuineness or the required measure and degree of our repentance and faith, quite destructive of "comfort," must remain throughout life.

6. But if neither our repentance, nor even a

consciousness of faith, when joined with it, can be the evidence of the fact of our adoption: it has been urged, that when all those graces, which are called the fruits of the Spirit, are found in our experience, they, at least, must be sufficient evidence of the fact, without supposing a more direct testimony of the Holy Spirit. The "fruits" thus referred to, are those enumerated by St. Paul in his Epistle to the Galatians. "But the fruit of the Spirit, is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness,

goodness," &c. Two things will here be granted, and they greatly strengthen the argument for a direct testimony of the Holy Spirit:- that these fruits are found only in those who have been received, by the remission of their sins, into the Divine favor; and that they are fruits of the Spirit of adoption. The first is proved from the connection of the words which follow: "And they that are christ's have crucified the flesh," &c.

For to be "Christ's," and to be "in Christ," are phrases,

with the apostle, equivalent to being in a state of justification:- "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." The second is proved by the connection of the words with verse 18, "But if ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law," for these words are exactly parallel to chap. 4:5, 6, "To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons; and because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." These are, then, the fruits

following upon a state of pardon, adoption, and our receiving the Spirit of adoption. We allow that they presuppose pardon; but then they as clearly presuppose the Spirit of adoption, "sent forth into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father;" that is, they not only presuppose our pardon, but pardon previously attested and made known to us; the persuasion of which conveyed to the mind, not by them, but by the Spirit of adoption, is the foundation of them; at least, of that " love, joy, and

peace," which are mentioned first, and must not be separated, in the argument, from the other. Nor can these "fruits" result from any thing but manifested pardon; they cannot themselves manifest our pardon, for they cannot exist till it is manifested. If we "love God," it is because we know him as God reconciled; if we have "joy in God," it is because "we have received the reconciliation;" if we have peace, it is because "being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus

Christ," God, conceived of as angry, cannot be the object of filial love; pardon unfelt, supposes guilt and fear still to burden the mind, and guilt and "joy" and "peace"

cannot exist. But by the argument of those who make these the media of ascertaining the fact of our forgiveness and adoption, we must be supposed to love God, while yet we feel him to be angry with us; to rejoice and have peace, while the fearful apprehensions of the consequences of

unremitted sin are not removed; and if this is impossible, then the ground of our love, and joy, and peace, is pardon revealed and witnessed, directly and immediately by the Spirit of adoption.

It has been said, indeed, that love to God may be produced from a consideration of God's general love to mankind in his Son, and that, therefore, the force of the above argument is broken; but we reply, that, in Scripture, Christians are spoken of as "reconciled to

God;" as "translated into the kingdom of his dear Son;" as "children," "heirs," &c; and, correspondency with these relations, their love is spoken of as love to God as their Father, - love to God as their God in covenant, who calls himself "their God," and them "his people," This is the love of God exhibited in the New Testament; and the question is, whether such a love of God as this can spring from a knowledge of his "general love to man," or whether it arises, under the Spirit's influence, from a persuasion of his

pardoning love to us "individually." To clear this, we may divide those who hear the Gospel, or Christians by profession, into the following classes:- the carnal and careless;- the despairing;- the penitent, who seek God with hope as well as desire, now discouraged by their fears, and sunk under their load of conscious guilt, and again encouraged by a degree of hope;- and, lastly, those who are "justified by faith, and have peace with God." The first class know God's "general love to man;" but it will not be

pleaded that they love him. - The second know the "general love of God to man;" but, thinking themselves exceptions from his mercy, cannot love him on that account. - The third admit the same "general love of God to man,"and it is the foundation of their hope; but does this produce love? The view of his mercy in the gift of his Son, and in the general promise, may produce a degree of this emotion, or perhaps more properly of gratitude; but do they love his justice, under the condemnation of

which they feel themselves; and his holiness, the awful purity of which makes them afraid? If not, they do not love God as God; that is, as a whole, in all his perfections, the awful as well as the attractive, the alarming as well as the encouraging; which is, doubtless, the character of the love of those who are justified by faith. But, leaving this nicer distinction, the main question is, do they love him as a Father, as their God in covenant; with the love which leads up the affections of "peace and

joy," as well as "gentleness, goodness, and fidelity? for in this company, so to speak, the apostle places this grace, where it is a "fruit of the Spirit," - "the Spirit which they that believed on him should receive." This is impossible; for these seeking, though hoping penitents, do not regard God as their Father in that special sense in which the word is correlative "to children and heirs;" - they do not regard him as their God in that covenant which says, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and

their sins and iniquities I will remember no more; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." This is what they seek, but have not found; and they cannot love God under relations in which they know, and painfully feel, that he does not yet stand to them. They know his "general love to man" but not his pardoning love to them; and therefore cannot love him as reconciled to them by the death of his Son. It follows, therefore, that the last class only, the "justified by faith," bear that love to

God, which is marked by the characters impressed upon it by the apostles. He is their Father, and they love him as his children: he is their God in covenant; and, as they can, in this appropriating sense, call him their God, they love him correspondency, though not adequately. Their love, therefore, rests upon their persuasion of their personal and individual interest in his pardoning, adopting, and Covenant fulfilling mercy to them; and where these benefits are not personally enjoyed, this kind of love to

God cannot exist. This, then, we think sufficiently establishes the fact, that the Scriptures of the New Testament, when speaking of the love of believers to God, always suppose that it arises from a persuasion of God's special love to them as individuals, and not merely from a knowledge of his "general love" to mankind.

Others there are who, in adverting to these fruits of the Spirit, over-look "love, joy, and peace,"

and fix their attention only on "gentleness, goodness,

meekness, fidelity, and temperance," as those graces which make up our practical holiness, and thus argue justification from regeneration, which is an unquestionable concomitant of it. The reply to this is, that the fruit of the Spirit is undivided; that all attempts at separating it are, therefore, criminal and delusive; and that where there is not "love, joy, and peace," we have no Scriptural reason to conclude that there is that gentleness, that goodness, that meekness, &c, of which the apostle speaks,

or, in other words, that there is that state of regeneration which the Scriptures describe; at least not ordinarily, for we leave seasons of deep spiritual exercise, and cases of physical depression, to be treated.according to their merits, Thus this argument falls to the ground. But the same conclusion is reached in another way. Persons of this opinion would infer forgiveness from holiness; but holiness consists in habits and acts of which love to God is the principle, for we first "love God,"

and then "keep his commandments." Holiness then is preceded by love as its root, and that, as we have seen, by manifested pardon. For this love is the love of a pardoned sinner to God as a Father, as a God in actual covenant, offered on one part, and accepted on the other; and it exists before holiness, as the principle exists before the act and the habit. In the process then of inferring our justified state from moral changes, if we find what we think holiness without love, it is the holiness of a Pharisee

without principle. If we join to it the love which is supposed to be capable of springing from God's general love to man, this is a principle of which Scripture takes no cognizance, and which at best, if it exist at all, must be a very mixed and defective sentiment, and cannot originate a holiness like that which distinguishes the "new creature." It is not, therefore, a warrantable evidence of either regeneration or justification. But if we find love to God as a God

reconciled; as a Father; as a God who "loves us;" it is plain that, as this love is the root of holiness, it precedes it: and we must consider God under these lovely relations on some other evidence than "the testimony of our own spirits," which evidence can be no other than that of the Spirit of God.

Thus it is established, that the witness of the Spirit is direct and not mediate; and the following extracts will show that this is no new or unsanctioned doctrine. Luther was

strengthened by the discourse of an old Augustine monk, concerning the certainty we may have that our sins are forgiven. God likewise gave him much comfort in his temptations, by that saying of St. Bernard,'

It is necessary to believe, first of all, that you cannot have forgiveness but by the mercy of God; and next, that through his mercy, thy sins are forgiven thee' This is the witness which the Holy Spirit bears in thy heart, ' Thy sins are forgiven thee.' And thus it

is, that according to the apostle, a man is justified freely through faith." (Life of Martin Luther, by John David Hersmchmid.)

"In the 88th Psalm is contained the prayer of one, who, although he felt in himself that he had not only man, but also God angry toward him; yet he by prayer humbly resorted unto God, as the only port of consolation; and, in the midst of his desperate state of trouble, put the hope of his salvation in him whom he felt his enemy. Howbeit, no man of himself can do

this, but the Spirit of God that striketh man's heart with fear, prayeth for the man stricken and feared, with unspeakable groanings. And when you feel yourself, and know any other oppressed after such sort, be glad; for after that God hath made you know what you be of yourself, he will doubtless show you comfort, and declare unto you what you be in Christ his only Son; and use prayer often, for that is the means whereby God will be sought unto for his gifts." (Bishop Hooper. See Fox's Acts and Monuments.)

"It is the proper effect of the blood of Christ to cleanse our consciences from dead works to serve the living God; which, if we find it doth, Christ is come to us as he is to come; and the Spirit is come, and puts his teste, (witness.) And if we have his teste, we may go our way in peace; we have kept a right feast to him, and to the memory of his coming. Even so come, Lord Jesus, and come, O blessed Spirit, and bear witness to our spirit that Christ's water, and his blood, we have our part in both; both in the fountain

opened for sin and uncleanness, and in the blood of the New Testament, the legacy whereof is everlasting life in thy kingdom of glory." (Bishop Andrew, Sermon of the sending of the Holy Ghost.)

"The Spirit which God hath given us to assure us that we are the sons of God, to enable us to call upon him as our Father." (Hooker, Sermon of Certainty of Faith.)

"Unto you, because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into

your hearts, to the end ye might know that Christ hath built you upon a rock immovable, that he hath registered your names in the book of life." (Hooker. Sermon on Jude.)

"From adoption flows all Christians' joy; for the Spirit of adoption is, first, a witness, Rom. 8:16; second, a seal, Eph. 4:30; third, the pledge and earnest of our inheritance, Eph. 1:14, setting a holy security on the soul, whereby it rejoiceth even in affliction, in hope of glory." (Archbishop Usher. Sum

and Substance of Christian Religion.)

"This is one great office of the Holy Ghost, to ratify and seal up to us the forgiveness of our sins.

'In whom, after ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise,'" &c, (Bishop Brownrigg's Sermon on Whitsunday.)

"It is the office of the Holy Ghost to assure us of the adoption of sons, to create in us a sense of the paternal love of God toward us, to give us an earnest of our everlasting

inheritance. The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God. And because we are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. For we have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but we have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God. As, therefore, we are born

again by the Spirit, and receive from him our regeneration, so we are also assured by the same Spirit of our adoption; and because being sons, we are also heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, by the same Spirit we have the pledge, or rather the earnest of our inheritance. For he which established us in Christ, and hath anointed us in God, who hath also sealed us, and hath given us the earnest of his Spirit in our hearts; so that we are sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our

inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession." (Bishop Pearson on the Creed.)

"This is that pneuma huiothesia, that Spirit of adoption which constituted us the sons of God, qualifying us so to be by dispositions resembling God, and filial affections toward him; qualifying us that we are so, and causing us, by a free instinct, to cry, Abba, Father; running into his bosom of love, and flying under the wings of his mercy in all our needs

and distresses; whence, as many as are led by the Spirit, they (saith Paul) are the sons of God, and the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God" (Dr. Isaac Barrow's Sermon on the Gift of the Holy Ghost.)

The second testimony is, that of our own spirits, "and is a consciousness of our having received in and by the Spirit of adoption, the tempers mentioned in the word of God, as belonging to his adopted children; that we are inwardly conformed by the

Spirit of God, to the image of his Son, and that we walk before him in justice, mercy, and truth, doing the things which are pleasing in his sight." (Wesley's Sermons.) But this testimony, let it be observed, is not to the fact of our adoption directly, but to the fact that we have, in truth, received the Spirit of adoption, and that we are under no delusive impressions. This will enable us to answer a common objection to the doctrine of the Spirit's direct witness. This is, that when the evidence of a first

witness must be supported by that of a second, before it can be fully relied on, it appears to be by no means of a

"decisive and satisfactory character; and that it might be as well to have recourse at once to the evidence, which, after all, seems to sustain the main weight of the cause." The answer to this is not difficult: if it were, it would weigh nothing against an express text of Scripture, which speaks of the witness of the Holy Spirit and the witness of our own spirits, Both

must, therefore, be concluded necessary, though we should not see their concomitancy and Mutual relation. The case is not, however, involved in entire obscurity. Our own spirits can take no cognizance of the mind of God, as to our actual pardon, and can bear no witness to that fact. The Holy Spirit only, who knows the mind of God, can be this witness; and if the fact, that God is reconciled to us, can only be known to him, by him only can it be attested to us. It cannot, therefore, be

"as well for us to have recourse at once to the evidence of our own spirits;" because, as to this fact, our own spirits have no evidence to give. They cannot give direct evidence of it; for we know not what passes in the mind of the invisible God: they cannot give indirect evidence of the fact; for no moral changes, of which our spirits can be conscious, have been stated in Scripture as the proofs of our pardon; they prove that there is a work of God in our hearts, but they are not proofs of our actual

forgiveness. Our own spirits are competent witnesses that such moral effects have been produced in our hearts and character, as it is the office of the Holy Spirit to produce; they prove, therefore, the reality of the presence of the Holy Spirit with us, and in us. That competent and infallible witness has borne his testimony that God is become our Father; he has shed abroad his holy comfort, the comfort which arises from the sense of pardon, - and his moral operation within us,

accompanying, or immediately following upon this, making us new creatures in Christ Jesus, is the proof that we are in no delusion as to the witness who gives this testimony being, in truth, the Spirit of God.

Of the four opinions on this subject entertained by divines, the first alone is fully conformable to the Scriptures, and ought, therefore, to be believed and taught. The second opinion is refuted in our examination of the third; for what is called "the

reflex act of faith," is only a consciousness of believing, which we have shown must be exercised in order to pardon, but cannot be an evidence of it. The third opinion has been examined in all its parts, except the reference to

"voices and impulses," in the quotation from Scott's Commentary, which appears to have been thrown in ad captandum. To this we may reply, that however the fact of his adoption is revealed to man by the Holy Spirit, it is done by his influence and

inexplicable operation, producing clear satisfaction and conviction, that God is reconciled; that "our iniquities are forgiven, and our sins covered." The fourth opinion was refuted when first stated.

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45 EXTENT OF THE ATONEMENT

We have already spoken of some of the leading blessings derived to man from the death of Christ, and the conditions on which they are made

attainable. Before the remainder are adduced, it may be here a proper place to inquire into the extent of that atonement for sin made by the death of our Savior, and whether the blessings of justification, regeneration, and adoption, are rendered attainable by all to whom the Gospel is proclaimed.

This inquiry leads us into what is called the Calvinistic controversy; a controversy which has always been conducted with great ardor, and sometimes with

intemperance. I shall endeavor to consider such parts of it as are comprehended in the question before us, with perfect calmness and fairness; recollecting, on the one hand, how many excellent and learned men have been arranged on each side; and, on the other, that while all honor is due to great names, the plain and unsophisticated sense of the word of inspired truth must alone decide on a subject with respect to which it is not silent.

In the system usually called by the name of Calvinism, and which shall subsequently be exhibited in its different modifications, there are, I think, many great errors; but they have seldom been held except in connection with a class of vital truths. By many writers who have attacked this system, the truth which it contains, as well as the error, has often been invaded; and the assault itself has been not infrequently conducted on principles exceedingly antiscriptural, and fatally delusive. These

considerations are sufficient to inspire caution. The controversy is a very voluminous one; and yet no great dexterity is required to exhibit it with clearness in a comparatively small compass. Its essence lies in very limited bounds; and, according to the plan of this work, the whole question will be tested, first and chiefly, by Scriptural authority. High Calvinism, indeed, affects the mode of reasoning a priori, and delights in metaphysics. To some also it gives most delight to see it opposed on

the same ground; and to such disputants it will be much less imposing to resort primarily, and with all simplicity, to the testimony of the sacred writings. "It is sometimes complained," says one, "that the mind is unduly biased in its judgment, by a continual reference to the authority of the Scriptures. The complaint is just, if the Scriptures are not the word of God: but if they are, there is an opposite and corresponding danger to be guarded against, that of suffering the mind to be unduly biased in the study

and interpretation of the revealed will of God, by the deductions of unaided reason." (Dr. Whiteley's Essays.); With respect to the controversy, we may also observe, that it forms a clear case of appeal to the Scriptures: for to whom the benefits of Christ's death are extended, whether to the whole of our race, or to a part, can be matter of revelation only; and the sole province of reason is that of interpreting, with fairness, and consistently with the acknowledged principles of that revelation, those parts of it

in which the subject is directly or incidentally introduced.

The question before us, put into its most simple form, is, whether our Lord Jesus Christ did so die for all men, as to make salvation attainable by all men; and the affirmative of this question is, we think, the doctrine of Scripture.

We assume that this is plainly expressed,

1. In all those passages which declare that Christ died "for all men," and speak of his death as an

atonement for the sins "of the whole world."

We have already seen, in treating of our Lord's atonement, in what sense the phrase, to die "for us," must be understood; that it signifies to die in the place and stead of man, as a sacrificial oblation, by which satisfaction is made for the sins of the individual, so that they become remissible upon the terms of the evangelical covenant. When, therefore, it is said, that Christ "by the grace of God tasted death for every man;" and

that "he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world;" it can only, we think, be fairly concluded from such declarations, and from many other familiar texts, in which the same phraseology is employed, that, by the death of Christ, the sins of every man are rendered remissible, and that salvation is consequently attainable by every man. Again, our Lord calls himself "the Savior of the world;" and is, by St. Paul, called "the Savior of

all men." John the Baptist points him out as

"the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world;" and our Lord himself declares, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life: for God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." So, also the Apostle Paul, "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto

himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them."

2. In those passages which attribute an equal extent to the effect; of the death of Christ as to the effects of the fall of our first parents "For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many" "Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all

men unto justification of life." (1) (1) To these might be added all those passages which ascribe the abolition of bodily death to Christ, who, in this respect, repairs the effect of the transgression of Adam, which he could only do in consequence of having redeemed that body from the power of the grave. This argument may be thus stated. It is taught in Scripture, that all shall rise from the dead. It is equally clear from the same authority, that all shall rise in consequence of the inter position of Christ, the

second Adam, the representative and Redeemer of man - "as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." It follows, therefore, that if the wicked are raised from the dead, it is in consequence of the power which Christ, as Redeemer, acquired over them, and of his right in them. That this resurrection is to them a curse, was not in the purpose of God, but arises from their willful rejection of the Gospel. To be restored to life is in itself a good; that it is turned to an evil is their own fault; and

if they are not raised from the dead in consequence of Christ's right in them, acquired by purchase, it behooves those of a different opinion to show under what other constitution than that of the Gospel a resurrection of the body is provided for. The original law contains no intimation of this, nor of a general judgment, which latter supposes a suspension of the sentence inconsistent with the strictly legal penalty," in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

As the unlimited extent of Christ's atonement to all mankind, is plainly expressed in the above-cited passages, so is it, we also assume, necessarily implied, 1. In those which declare that Christ died not only for those that are saved, but for those who do, or may perish; so that it cannot be argued, from the actual condemnation of men, that they were excepted from many actual, and from all the offered, benefits of his death. "And through thy knowledge shall thy weak brother perish, for whom Christ

died" "Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died" "False teachers, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction" So also in the case of the apostates mentioned in the Epistle to the Hebrews, "Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing,

and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? It any dispute should here arise as to the phrase, "wherewith he was sanctified," reference may be made to chap. 6, of the same epistle, where the same class of persons, whose doom is pronounced to be inevitable, are said to have been "once enlightened;" to have "tasted of the heavenly gift;" to have been "made partakers of the Holy Ghost;" to have

"tasted the good word of God," and "the powers of

the world to come:" all which expressions show that they were placed on the same ground with other Christians as to their interest in the new covenant, - a point to which we shall again recur,

2. In all those passages which make it the duty of men to believe the Gospel; and place them under guilt, and the penalty of death for rejecting it. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

"But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." "He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God." "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned" "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" "The Lord Jesus shall be

revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." The plain argument from all such passages is, that the Gospel is commanded to be preached to all men; that it is preached to them that they may believe in Christ, its Author; that this faith is required of them, in order to their salvation, - "that believing ye may have life through his name;" that they have power thus to believe to their salvation;

(from whatever source, or by whatever means this power is derived to them, need not now be examined: it is plainly supposed; for not to believe, is reckoned to them as a capital crime, for which they are condemned already, and reserved to final condemnation;) and that having power to believe, they have the power to obtain salvation, which, as it can be bestowed only through the merits of Christ's sacrifice, proves that it extends to them. The same conclusion, also, follows from the nature of

that faith, which is required by the Gospel, in order to salvation.

This, we have already seen, is not mere assent to the doctrine of Christ's sacrificial death, but personal trust in it as our atonement; which those, surely, could not be required by a God of truth to exercise, if that atonement did not embrace them. Nor could they be guilty for refusing to trust in that which was never intended to be the object of their trust; for if God so designed to exclude them

from Christ, he could not command them to trust in Christ; and if they are not commanded thus to trust in Christ, they do not violate any command by not believing; and, in this respect, are innocent.

3. In all those passages in which men's failure to obtain salvation is placed to the account of their own opposing wills, and made wholly their own fault. "How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens

under her wings, and ye would not!"

"And ye will not come to me that ye may have life." "Bringing upon themselves swift destruction." "Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." It is useless here to multiply quotations, since the New Testament so constantly exhorts men to come to Christ, reproves them for neglect, and threatens them with the penal consequences of their own folly: thus uniformly placing the bar to their salvation, just

where Christ places it, in his parable of the supper, in the perverseness of those, who having been bidden to the feast, would not come. From these premises, then, it follows, that since the Scriptures always attribute the ruin of men's souls to their own will, and not to the will of God; we ought to seek for no other cause of their condemnation. We can know nothing on this subject but what God has revealed. He has declared that it is not his will that men should perish: on the

contrary, "He willeth all men to be saved;"

and therefore commands us to pray for "all men;" he has declared, that the reason they are not saved, is not that Christ did not die for them, but that they will not come to him for the "life" which he died to procure for "the world;" and it must therefore be concluded, that the sole bar to the salvation of all who are lost is in themselves, and not in any such limitation of Christ's redemption, as supposes that they were not

comprehended in its efficacy and intention.

It will now be necessary for us to consider what those who have adopted a different opinion have to urge against these plain and literal declarations of Scripture. It is their burthen, that they are compelled to explain these passages in a more limited and qualified sense, than the letter of them and its obvious meaning teaches; and that they must do this by inference merely; for it is not even pretended that there is any text whatever

to be adduced, which declares as literally, that Christ did not die for the salvation of all, as those which declare that he did so die. We have no passages, therefore, to examine, which, in their clear literal meaning, stand opposed to those which we have quoted, so as to present apparent contradictions which require to be reconciled by concession on one side or the other. This is at least, prima facie, strongly in favor of those who hold that, in the same sense, and with the same design,

"Jesus Christ tasted death for every man."

To our first class of texts it is objected, that the terms "all men" and "the world? are sometimes used in Scripture in a limited sense.

This may be granted, without injury to the argument drawn from the texts in question. But though in Scripture, as in common language, all and every, and such universals are occasionally used with limitation when the connection prevents any misunderstanding; yet they

are, nevertheless, strictly universal terms, and are most frequently used as such. The true question is whether, in the places above cited, they can be understood except in the largest sense; whether

"all men," and "the world," can be interpreted of the elect only, that is of some men of all countries.

We may very confidently deny this, -

1. Because the universal sense of the terms, "all," and "all men," and every man," is confirmed, either

by the context of the passages in which they occur, or by other scriptures, When Isaiah says "All we like sheep have gone astray: and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all;" he affirms that the iniquity of all those who have gone astray, was laid on Christ. When St Paul says, "We thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead;" he argues the universality of spiritual death, from the universality of the means adopted for raising men to spiritual life: a plain proof that it was received as an

undisputed principle in the primitive Church, that Christ's dying for all men was to be taken in its utmost latitude, or it could not have been made the basis of the argument. When the sane apostle calls Christ the "Savior of all men and especially of those that believe." he manifestly includes both believers and unbelievers, that is, all mankind, in the term "all men;" and declares, that Christ is their Savior, though the full benefits of his salvation are received through faith only by them that believe. When again he

declares that, "As by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men, (eis) in order to justification of life;" the force of the comparison is lost if the term "all men," is not taken in its full extent; for the apostle is thus made to say, as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men; EVEN so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon a few men. Nor can it be objected that the apostle uses the terms, "many," and "all

men," indiscriminately in this chapter; for there is in this no contradiction, and the objection is in our favor. All men are many, though many are not in every case all. But the term, "many," is taken by him in the sense of all, as appears from the following parallels: "death passed upon all men;" "many be dead;" "the gift by grace hath abounded unto many;" "the free gift came upon all men," "By one man's disobedience many were made (constituted) sinners," made liable to death; "so by the obedience

of one shall many be made (constituted) righteous." On the last passage we may observe that "many," or "the many," must mean all men in the first clause; nor is it to be restricted in the second, as though by being "made righteous," actual, personal justification were to be understood; for the apostle is not speaking of believers individually, but of mankind collectively, and the opposite conditions in which the race itself is placed by the offence of Adam and the obedience of Christ in all its generations.

It is equally impracticable to restrict the phrases, "the world," "the whole world," and to paraphrase them the "world of the elect:" and yet there is no other alternative; for either "the whole world" means those elected out of it; or else Christ died in an equal sense for every man.

"God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son," &c. Here, if the world mean not the elect only, but every man, then every man was "so loved" by God, that he gave his own Son for his

redemption. To say that the world, in a few places, means the Roman empire, and in others Judea, is nothing to the purpose, unless it were meant to affirm, that the elect were the people of Judea, or those of the Roman empire only. It proves, it is true, a hyperbolical use of the term in both instances; but this cannot be urged in the case before us: for,-

1. The elect are never called "the world" in Scripture; but are distinguished from it. "I have chosen you out

of the world; therefore the world hateth you."

2. The common division of mankind, in the New Testament, is only into two parts; the disciples of Christ, and "the world." "If ye were of the world, the world would love its own." "Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." "We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness."

3. When the redemption of Christ is spoken of, it often includes both those who had been chosen out of the world, and those who

remained still of the world. "And you hath he reconciled," say the apostles to those that had already believed; and as to the rest," God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed to us the word of reconciliation," plainly that they might beseech this "world" to be reconciled to God: so that both believers and unbelievers were interested in the reconciling ministry, and the work of Christ. "And he is the propitiation

for our sins, and not for ours only; but also for the sins of the whole world:" words cannot make the case plainer than these, since this same writer, in the same epistle, makes it evident how he uses the term "world," when he affirms that "the, world lieth in wickedness," in contradistinction to those who knew that they were "of God."

4. In the general commission before quoted, the expression "world" is connected with universal terms which carry it forth

into its utmost latitude of meaning. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel (the good news) to every creature;" and this too in order to his believing it, that he may be saved; "he that believeth shall be saved; and he that believeth not (this good news preached to him that he might be saved) shall be damned,"

5. All this is confirmed from the gross absurdity of this restricted interpretation when applied to several of the foregoing passages, "For

God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whoso, ever believeth in him should not perish." Now, if the world here means the elect world, or the elect not yet called out of it, then it is affirmed, that "whosoever" of this elect body, believeth shall not perish; which plainly implies, that some of the elect might not believe, and therefore perish, contrary to their doctrine. This absurd consequence is still clearer from the verses which immediately follow. John 3:17,18, "For God sent not

his Son into the world, to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already." Now here we must take the term "world," either extensively for all mankind or limitedly for the elect. If the former, then all men "through him may be saved," but only through faith: he therefore, of this world that believeth may be saved; but he of this world that believeth not is condemned already." The sense is here plain and

consistent; but if, on the other hand, we take "the world" to mean the elect only, then he of this elect world that believeth may be saved, and he of the elect world that "believeth not is condemned;" so that the restricted interpretation necessarily supposes, that elect persons may remain in unbelief, and be lost, The same absurdity will follow from a like interpretation of the general commission. Either "all the world" and "every creature," mean every man, or the elect only. If the former, it

follows, that he of this "world," any individual among those included in the phrase, "every creature," who believes, "shall be saved," or, not believing, "shall be damned:" if the latter, then he of the elect, any individual of the elect, who believes, "shall be saved," and any individual of the elect who believes not, "shall be damned." Similar absurdities might be brought out from other passages; but if these are candidly weighed, it will abundantly appear, that texts so plain and explicit

cannot be turned into such consequences by any true method of interpretation, and that they must, therefore, be taken in their obvious sense, which unequivocally expresses the universality of the atonement.

It has been urged, indeed, that our Lord himself says, John 17:9, "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me." But will they here interpret "the world" to be the world of the elect? if so, they cut even them off from the

prayers of Christ. But if by "the world" they would have us understand the world of the non-elect, then they will find that all the prayers which our Lord puts up for those whom "the Father hath given him," had this end, "that they "the non-elect" 'world,' may believe that thou hast sent me," verse 21: let them choose either side of the alternative The meaning of this passage is, however, made obvious by the context.

Christ, in the former part of his intercession, as

recorded in this chapter, prays exclusively, not for his Church in all ages, but for his disciples then present with him; as appears plain from verse 12. "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name:" but he was only with his first disciples, and for them he exclusively prays in the first instance; then, in verse 20, he prays for all who, in future, should believe on him through their words; and he does this in order that "the world might believe." Thus "the world," in its largest sense, is not cut off,

but expressly included in the benefits of this prayer.

John 10:15, "I lay down my life for the sheep," is also adduced, to prove that Christ died for none but his sheep. But the consequence will not hold; for there is no inconsistency between his having died for them that believe, and also for them that believe not. Christ is said to be "the Savior of all men, and especially of them that believe;" two propositions which the apostle held to be perfectly consistent. The very context shows that

Christ laid down his life for others beside those whom in that passage, he calls "the sheep." The sheep here intended, as the discourse will show, were those of the Jewish "fold;" for he immediately adds," other sheep I have, which are not of this fold," clearly meaning the Gentiles: "them must I bring." He, therefore, laid down his life for them also; for the sheep in the fold, who "knew his voice, and followed him," and for them out of the fold, who still needed "bringing in;" even for "the lost, whom he came to seek

and save," which is the character of all mankind: "all we like sheep have gone astray;" and "the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

A restrictive interpretation of the first two classes of texts we have quoted above, may then be affirmed directly and expressly to contradict the plainest declarations of God's own word. For, it is not true, upon this interpretation that God loved "the world," if the majority he loved not; nor is it true that Christ was

not "sent to condemn the world," if he was sent even to enhance its condemnation; nor that the Gospel, as the Gospel, can be preached "to every creature," if to the majority it cannot be preached as "good tidings of great joy to all people;" for it is sad and doleful tidings, if the greater part of the human race are shut out from the mercies of their Creator. If, then, in this interpretation there is so palpable a contradiction of the words of inspiration itself, the system which is built upon it cannot be sustained.

As to the texts which we have urged, as necessarily implying the unrestricted extent of the death of Christ, the usual answers to those which speak of Christ having died for them that perish, may be briefly examined. "Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died," Rom. 14:15. Him, says Poole, (Annotations,) for whom, "in the judgment of charity," we are to presume Christ died. To say nothing of the danger of such unlicensed paraphrases, in the interpretation of Scripture, it is obvious that

this exposition entirely annuls the motive by which the apostle enforces his exhortation. Why are we not to be an occasion of sin to our brother? 1 The answer is, lest we "destroy him;" and, in the parallel place, 1 Cor. 8:11, lest "he perish." But what is the aggravation of the offence? Truly that "Christ died for him;" and so we have no tenderness for a soul on whom Christ had so much compassion as to die for his salvation. Let the text then be tried, as paraphrased by Poole and other Calvinists: "Destroy not him, for

whom, in the judgment of charity, it may be concluded, Christ died;" and it turns the motive the other way. For if I admit that none can be destroyed for whom Christ died, then, in proportion to the charity of my judgment, that any individual is of this number, I may be the less cautious of ensnaring his conscience in indifferent matters, since at least, this is certain, that he cannot perish, and I cannot be guilty of the aggravated offence of destroying him who was an object of the compassion of Christ. Who

can suppose that the apostle would thus counteract his own design? or that he should seriously admonish his readers not to do that which was impossible, if, in fact, he taught them that Christ died only for the elect; and that they for whom he died, could never perish?

Another commentator, of the same school, explains this as a caution against doing that which had a "tendency to the ruin of one for whom Christ died; not that it implies, that the weak brother would

actually perish." (Rev. T. Scott's Notes.) But in this case, also, as it is assumed, that it was a doctrine taught by St. Paul, and received by the Churches to whom he wrote, that the elect could not perish, the motive is taken away upon which the admonition is grounded. For if the persons to whom the apostle wrote, knew that the weak brother, for whom Christ died, could not perish, then nothing which they could do had any "tendency" to destroy him. It might injure him, disturb his mind, lead him

into sin, destroy his comforts; all, or any of which, would have been appropriate motives on which to have urged the caution: but nothing can have even a tendency to destroy him whose salvation is fixed by an unalterable decree. Mr. Scott is, however, evidently not satisfied with his own interpretation; and gives a painful example of the influence of a preconceived system in commenting upon Scripture, by charging the apostle himself with careless writing. "We may, however,

observe, that the apostles did not write in that exact, systematical style which some affect, otherwise they would scrupulously have avoided such expressions." This is rather in the manner of Priestley and Belsham, than that of an orthodox commentator; but it does homage to the force of truth by turning away from it, and by tacitly acknowledging that the Scriptures cannot be Calvinistically interpreted. The same commentators, following, as they do, in the train of the Calvinistic divines in general, may

furnish, also, the answer to the argument, from 2 Peter 2:1, "Denying the Lord that bought them, and bringing upon themselves swift destruction." Poole gives us three interpretations: the first is, "the Lord that bought Israel out of Egypt;" as though St. Peter could be speaking of the Mosaic, and not of the Christian redemption; and as though the Judaizing teachers, supposing the apostle to speak of them, denied the God of the Jews, when it was their object to set up his religion against that of Christ. The second is, that

"they were bought," or redeemed, by Christ, from temporal deat h, their lives having been spared: but we have no such doctrine in Scripture, as that the long suffering of wicked men, procured by Christ's redemption, is unconnected in its intent with their eternal salvation. The barren fig tree was spared at the intercession of Christ, that means might be taken with it, to make it fruitful; and in this same Epistle of St. Peter, he teaches us to

"account the long suffering of the Lord salvation;" meaning, doubtless, in its tendency and intention. To this we may add, that there is nothing in the context to warrant this notion of mere temporal redemption. The third interpretation is, "that they denied the Lord, whom they professed to have bought them." This also is gratuitous, and gives a very different sense from that which the words of the apostle convey. But it is argued, that the offence would be the same in denying Christ, whether he really died for them, or that

they had professed to believe he died for them. Certainly not. Their crime, as it is put by the apostle, is not the denying of their former profession, or denying Christ, whom they formerly professed to have bought them; but denying Christ, who had actually bought them, and whom, for that reason, they ought never to have denied, but confessed at the hazard of their lives. Farther, if they merely denied that which they formerly professed, namely that Christ had bought them, and, in point of fact, he never did buy

them, they were in error when they professed to believe that he bought them, and spoke the truth only when they denied it; and if it be said, that they knew not but he had bought them, when they denied him, this might be a reason for their not being rewarded for renouncing an error, as being done unwittingly; but can be no reason for their being punished, though unwittingly they went back to the truth of the case.- There can be no great guilt in our denying Christ, if Christ never died for us.

Mr. Scott partly adopts, and partly rejects Poole's solution of this Scriptural difficulty. But as he charged St. Paul with want of exactness in writing to the Romans, so also St. Peter, in the passage before us, comes in for his share of the same censure. "It was not the manner of the sacred writers, to express themselves with that systematic exactness, which many now affect."

The question is not, however, one of systematic exactness; but of common intelligible writing.

Mr., Scott's observation on this passage, is, "that Christ's ransom was of infinite sufficiency; and the proposal of it, in Scripture, general; so that men are addressed according to their profession: but that Christ only intended to redeem those, whom he foresaw would eventually be saved."

(Notes on 2 Peter,) On this we may remark, 1. That the sufficiency of Christ's redemption is not in question; but the redemption itself of these deniers of Christ: he is

called "the Lord that bought them." In that sufficiency, too, Mr. Scott affirms, in fact, that they had no interest; for Christ did not "intend to redeem them;" on this showing, therefore, the Lord did not "buy them," which contradicts the apostle. 2. That the "proposal of the benefits of Christ's redemption is general;"

and that men are addressed, accordingly, as those who are interested in it, we grant, and feel how well this accords with the doctrine of general

redemption; but the difficulty lies with those who hold the limitation of Christ's redemption to the elect only, to explain, not merely how it is that men are addressed generally; but how the sins of those who perish, can be aggravated by the circumstance of Christ's having bought them, if he did not buy them; and how they can be punished for rejecting him, if they could never receive him, so as to be saved by him. This aggravation of their offence, by the circumstance of Christ

having bought them, is the doctrine of the text, of the force of which the above interpretations are manifest evasions.

We come now to the case of the apostates, mentioned in the Epistle to the Hebrews, 6:4-8, and 10:26-31. With respect to these passages, it is agreed that they speak of the ultimate and eternal condemnation and rejection of the persons mentioned in them. The question then is, whether Christ died for them, as he died for such as persevere? which is to be

determined by another question, whether they were ever true believers, and had received saving grace? If this be allowed, the proposition is established, that Christ died for them that perish; but in order to arrest this conclusion, all Calvinistic divines agree in denying that the persons referred to by the apostle, and against whom his terrible denunciations are directed, were ever true believers, or capable of becoming such; and here again we have another pregnant instance of the violence done to the

obvious meaning of the word of God, through the influence of a preconceived system. For,

1. It will not be denied that the Hebrews, to whom the epistle was addressed, were, in the main, at least, true believers; and that the passages in question were written to preserve them from apostasy; of which the rejection, and hopeless punishment, described by the apostle, is represented as the consequence. But if St. Paul had taught them, as he must have done, if Calvinism be the doctrine

of the New Testament, that they never could so full away, and so perish, this was no warning at all to them. To suppose he held out that as a terror, which he knew to be impossible, and had taught them also to be impossible, is the first absurdity which the Calvinistic interpretation involves.

2. It will not be denied, that he speaks of these wretched apostates, as deterring examples to the true believers among the Hebrews; but as such apostates never were

believers, and were not even rendered capable, by the grace of God, of becoming such, they could not be admonitory examples. To assume that the apostle, for the sake of argument and admonition, supposes believers to be in the same circumstances and case as those who never were, and never could be believers, and when he had instructed them that their cases could never be similar, is the second absurdity.

3. The apostates in question are represented,

by the apostle, "as falling away" from "repentance," and from Christ's "sacrifice for sins." The advocates of the system of partial redemption, affirm, that they fell away only from their profession of repentance and doctrinal belief of Christ's sacrifice for sins, in which they never had, and never could have, any interest. Yet the apostle places the hopelessness of their state on the impossibility of "renewing them again to repent once;" which proves that he considered their first repentance genuine

and evangelical; because the absence of such a repentance as they had at first, is given as the reason of the hopelessness of their condition. He moreover heightens the case, by alleging, that there remained "no more sacrifice for sins;" which as plainly proves that, before their apostasy, there was a sacrifice for their sins, and that they had only cut themselves off from its benefits by "willfully" renouncing it; in other words, that Christ died for them, and that they had placed themselves out of

the reach of the benefit of his death, by this one act of aggravated apostasy. The contrast lies between a hopeful and a hopeless case. Theirs was once a hopeful case, because they had "repented," and because there was then a "sacrifice for sins;" afterward it became hopeless, because it was

"impossible to renew them again unto repentance," and the sacrifice for sin no more remained for them: they had not only renounced their profession of it; but had renounced

the sacrifice itself, by renouncing Christianity. Now, so to interpret the apostle, as to make him describe the awful condition of apostates, as a "falling away" into a state of hopelessness, when, if Calvinism be the doctrine of the New Testament, their case was never really hopeful, but was as hopeless, as to their eternal salvation, before as after their apostasy, is the third absurdity.

4. But it is plain that theirs had been a state of actual salvation which could only

result from their having had an interest in the death of Christ. The proof of this lies in what the apostle affirms of the previous state of those who had finally apostatized, or might so apostatize. They were

"enlightened;" this, the whole train of Calvinistic commentators tell us means a mere speculative reception of the doctrine of the Gospel; they had "tasted of the heavenly gift," and of "the good word of God;" that is, say Poole and others," they tasted,

not digested; they had superficial relishes of joy and peace," and are to be compared "to the stony-ground hearers, who received the word with joy." "And were made partakers of the Holy Ghost;" that is, say some commentators of this class, in his operations, "trying how far a natural man may be raised, and not have his nature changed:" (Poole in loc.;) others, "by the communication of miraculous powers." They had "tasted of the powers of the world to come;" that is, they had felt the

powerful doctrines of the Gospel, but as all reprobates may feel them, sometimes powerfully convincing their judgment, at others troubling their consciences. "All these things," says Scott, (Notes,) "often take place in the hearts and consciences of men, who yet continue unregenerate."

These interpretations are undoubtedly forced upon these authors by the system they have adopted; but it unfortunately happens for them, that the apostle uses no term less strong in

describing the religious experience of these apostates than he does in speaking of that of true believers. They were "enlightened," is said of these apostates, "the eyes of your understanding being enlightened" is said of the Ephesians; and "being turned from darkness to light" is the characteristic of all believers. The apostates "tasted the heavenly gift;" this, too, is affirmed of true believers, "much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign

in life by one, Jesus Christ," Rom. 5:17. To be made "partakers of the Holy Ghost," is also the common distinctive character of all true Christians. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his;" "but ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." "To taste the heavenly gift" and "the good word of God," is also made the mark of true Christianity: "if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious."

Finally, "the powers of the world to come;" that is, of the Gospel dispensation, or the power of the Gospel, stand in precisely the same case. This Gospel is the "power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Since, then, the apostle expresses the prior experience of these apostates, by the same terms and phrases as those by which he designates the work of God in the hearts of those whose Christianity is, by all, acknowledged to be genuine, where is the authority on which these commentators make him

describe, not a saving work in the hearts of these apostates, during the time they held fast their profession, but a simulated one? They have clearly no authority for this at all; and their comments arise not out of the argument of St. Paul, nor out of his terms or phrases, or the connection of these passages with the rest of the discourse; but out of their own theological system alone; in other words, out of a mere human opinion which supplies a meaning to the apostle, of which he gives

not the most distant intimation. To make the apostle describe the falling away from a mere profession unaccompanied with a state of grace, by terms which he is constantly using to describe and characterize a state of grace, is the fourth absurdity.

We mark, also, two other absurdities. The interpretations above given are below the force of the terms employed; and they are above the character of reprobates.

They are below the force of the terms employed. To "taste the heavenly gift," is not a mere intellectual or sentimental approval of it; for this heavenly gift is distinguished both from the Holy Spirit, and from the word of God, mentioned afterward; which leaves us no choice but to interpret it of Christ: and then to taste of Christ, is to receive his grace and mercy; "if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious" Thus the Greek fathers, and many later divines, understand it of the remission of sins;

which interpretation is greatly confirmed by Rom. 5, where "the gift"

"the free gift" and "the gift by grace" are used both for the means of our justification, and for justification itself. To "taste the heavenly gift," then, is, in this sense, so to taste that the Lord is gracious as to receive the remission of sins. To be made "partakers of the Holy Ghost," follows this in the usual order of describing the work of God in the heart. It is the fruit of faith, the Spirit of adoption and

sanctification-the Spirit in his comforting and renewing influences following our justification. To restrain this participation of the Holy Ghost to the endowment of miraculous powers, requires it to be previously established, either, 1. That all professing Christians, in that age, were thus endowed with miraculous powers, of which there is no proof; or, 2. That only those who were thus endowed with miraculous gifts were capable of this aggravated apostasy; and then the apostle's warning

would not be a general one, even to the Christians of the apostolic age, nor even to all the believing Hebrews, which it manifestly is. On the other hand, since all true believers, in the sense of the apostle, received the Holy Ghost in his comforting and renovating influences, the meaning of the phrase becomes obvious, and it lays down the proper ground for a general admonition. Again; "to taste the good word of God," is still an advance in the process of a genuine experience. It is tasting the

good word, that is, the goodness of the word in a course of experience and practice; having personal proof of its goodness and adaptation to man's state in the world: for to argue from the term "taste" as though something superficial and transitory only were meant, is as absurd as to argue from the threat of Christ that those who refused the invitation of his servants should not "taste" of his supper, that he only excluded them from a superficial and transient gestation of his salvation here and

hereafter; or that, when the psalmist calls upon us to "taste and see that the Lord is good," he excludes a full, and rich, and permanent experience of the Divine goodness. Finally, if by the "powers of the world to come,"

it could be proved that the apostle meant the miraculous evidences of the truth of the Gospel, it would not follow that he supposes the persons spoken of to be endowed with miraculous powers; but that to taste these powers, was rather to

experience the abundant blessings of a religion thus confirmed and demonstrated by signs and wonders and divers miracles, according to what he urges in chap. 2:4, of the same epistle. The phrase, however, is probably a still farther advance upon the former, and signifies a personal experience of the mighty energy and saving power of the Gospel. Thus the interpretation of the Calvinists has the absurdity of making the apostle speak little things in great words, and of using unmeaning tautologies. To

"partake of the Holy Ghost" is, according to them, to have the gift of miracles, and to taste "the powers of the world to come" is to have the gift of miracles. To taste the "heavenly gift," is to have a superficial relish of Gospel doctrine, and "to taste the good word of God," is also to have a superficial relish of Gospel doctrine: but how, then, are we to take the term "taste," when the apostle speaks of tasting "the powers of the world to come?" According to these comments, this can only mean that they had a

superficial taste of the power of working miracles!

But as these interpretations are below the force of the terms, so they are above the capacity of the reprobate. "They had, moreover," says Scott, "tasted of the good word of God, and their connections, impressions, and transient affections, made them sensible that it was a good word, and that it was for their good to attend to it; and their purposes of doing so had produced such hopes and joys as have been described in the case

of the stony-ground hearers, Matt. 13:21,22."

That Mr. Scott had no right apprehension of the class of persons intended by those who received the good seed upon stony ground, might easily be proved; but this is beside our present purpose.

We find in the words quoted above, (and we refer to Mr. Scott rather than to the older divines of the same school, because it is often said that Calvinism is now modified and improved,)

"convictions," "impressions of the goodness of the word," and purposes of attending to it, ascribed to the non-elect; persons to whose salvation this bar is placed, that, according to this commentator, and all others who adopt the same system, Christ never "intentionally" died for them. We ask, then, are these "convictions, impressions," and "purposes," from the grace of God working in man, or from the natural man wholly unassisted by the grace of God? If the latter, then what becomes of the

doctrine of the entire corruption of human nature, which they profess to hold, and that so strenuously? "In me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." By the flesh, the apostle means, doubtless, his natural and unassisted state. Yet how many "good things"

are ascribed, by Mr. Scott, to the very reprobate? "Conviction of the truth of the Gospel" was doubtless "good," and showed, "in that day especially, when the prejudices of education had not yet come in to the

aid of truth, an honest spirit of inquiry, and a docile mind. "Impressions" are still better, as they argue affection to truth which the natural man, as such, hates; and these are improved into an acknowledgment "of the goodness of the word," though it is a reproving word, and a doctrine of holiness, and consequently of restraint. To this the merely "carnal mind," which St. Paul declares to be "enmity against God," is here allowed not only to assent, but also to perceive with some taste and

approving relish. "Purposes of attending to this good word," are also admitted, which is a still farther advance, and must by all be acknowledged to be "good," as they are the very basis of real religious attainment. Yet if all these, which, in the judgment of every spiritual man would be considered as placing such persons in a very hopeful state, and would give joy to angels, unless they were admitted to the secret of reprobation, are to be ascribed to nature; then the carnal mind is not

absolutely and in all cases "enmity against God;"

in our "flesh some good thing may dwell;" and we are not by nature "dead in trespasses and sins."

Let us then suppose, since this position cannot be maintained in defiance of the Scriptures, that these are the effects of the grace of God, and the influences of the Holy Spirit in man; to what end is that grace exerted? Is it that it may lead to salvation? This is denied, and consistently so; for can such convictions, and desires,

and purposes, lead to true repentance, when Christ gives true repentance to none but to the elect? Nor can they lead to pardon, because Christ has not intentionally "died for the persons in question." Is the end, then, as Poole, or rather his continuator states it, that the Holy Spirit may "try how far a natural man may be raised" without ceasing to be so? If that is affirmed, for whose sake is the experiment tried? Not surely for the sake of the Holy Spirit, whose omniscience needs no instruction by

experiment: not for ours; for this, instead of being edifying, only puzzles and confounds us, for who can tell how far this experiment may go, and how far it is making upon himself? This, too, is so very unworthy an aspersion upon the Holy Spirit, that it ought to make sober men very much suspect the system which requires it. Is it then, finally, as some have affirmed, to make the persons more guilty, and to heighten their condemnation? How few Calvinists, in the present day, are bold enough to

affirm this, although the advocates of that system have formerly done it; and yet this is the only practical end which their system will allow to be assigned to such an act as that which, by a strange abuse of terms, is called the operation of "common grace" in the hearts of the reprobate.

In no other practical end can it issue, but to aggravate their guilt and damnation, as the old divines of this school perceived and acknowledged. Either,

then, their interpretation of these passages affirms a change in the principles and feelings of the persons spoken of by the apostle in this epistle, much above the capacity and power of reprobates, greatly as it falls below the real import of the terms used; or else those who advocate the doctrine of reprobation are bound to the revolting conclusion, that the Holy Spirit thus works in them only to promote and deepen their destruction.

To that class of texts, which make it the duty of men to

believe the Gospel, and threaten them with punishment for not believing, and which we adduced to prove, by necessary implication, that Christ died for all men, it has been replied, that it is the duty of all men to believe the Gospel, whether they are interested in the death of Christ or not; and that they are guilty and deserving of punishment for not believing it. By this argument it is conceived, that all such passages are made consistent with the doctrine of the limited

extent of the death of Christ.

On both sides, then, it is granted, that it is the bounden duty of all men who hear the Gospel to believe it, and that the violation of this duty induces condemnation; but if Christ died not for all such persons, we think it is plain, that it cannot be their duty to believe the Gospel; and if this can be established, then does the Scriptural principle of the obligation of all men to believe, which is acknowledged on both

sides, refute all limitation of the extent of Christ's atonement.

To settle this point it is necessary to determine what is meant by believing the Gospel. Some writers in this controversy seem to take it only in the sense of giving credit to the Gospel as a Divine revelation; and not for accepting and trusting in it in order to salvation. But we have, in the New Testament, no such division of the obligation of believing into two distinct duties, one laid upon one class of persons,

and the other upon another class. So far from this, the faith which the Gospel requires of all, is trust in the Gospel;- "repentance toward God, and faith (trust) in our Lord Jesus Christ." Will any say, that when all men are commanded "every where to repent,"

two kinds of repentance are intended, one ineffectual, the other effectual; one to death, the other to life? And if not, will he contend that God commands one kind of faith to some, a faith which cannot lead to

salvation, another kind of faith, which does lead to salvation to others? that he commands a dead faith to the reprobate, a living faith to the elect? For, according to the intention of the command, such must be the duty; and if it is the duty of the reprobate to believe with the mere faith of assent, which, as to them, is dead, then no more was ever required of them, in the intention of God, than this dead faith. But if men will affirm this, they must show us such a restricted and modified command from God; and

they must point out, in the commands which we have to believe in Christ, such a distinction of the obligation of believing into a higher and lower duty. There is no such modified command, and there is no such distinction; but, on the contrary, the faith which is required of all is that, and not less than that, whereof cometh salvation; for with remission of sins and salvation it is constantly connected, "He that believeth shall be saved." "Whosoever believeth on him shall not perish." "That believing ye might have life

through his name." "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." The faith, then, required of all, is true faith; true faith following true repentance, the trust of a true penitent in the sacrifice of Christ as offered for his sins, that he may be forgiven, and received into the family of God.

If this, then, be the faith which is required of all who hear the Gospel, it is not, and cannot be the duty, of

those to believe the Gospel in the Scriptural sense of believing, for whom Christ died not. 1. Because it is impossible, and God cannot command a thing impossible, and then punish men for not doing it; for this contradicts all notions of justice and benevolence. Nor does it alter the case whether the impossibility arises from a positive necessitating decree, or from withholding the aid necessary to enable them to comply with the command; such persons as those for whom Christ died

not, never had, and never can have, the power to exercise the saving faith which is enjoined upon them; and being impossible to them, it never could be the subject of express command and obligation as to them; which nevertheless it is. 2. Because, according to the Calvinistic opinion, it is not in the intention of God that they should believe and be saved: what, therefore, he never intended, he could not command; and yet he has plainly commanded it.

3. Because what all are bound to believe or trust in, is true: but it is false, according to this system, that Christ died for the reprobate, and therefore they are not bound to believe or trust in him, though they are both commanded to believe, and threatened with condemnation if they believe not.

Here, then, is the dilemma into which all must fall, who deny that the necessary inference from the universal obligation to believe in Christ, is, as we

have stated it, that he died for all. If they deny the universality of the obligation to believe, they deny plain and express Scripture, which commands all men to believe; if they affirm the obligation to believe to be universal, they hold that men are bound to do that which is impossible; that the Lawgiver commands them to do what he never intended they should do; and that they are bound to believe and trust in what is not true, namely, that Christ died for them, and thus to lean upon a broken

reed, and to trust their salvation to a delusion.

This is a difficulty which the theologians of this school have felt. The synod of Dort says, (Act. Syn. Dord, part 1, cap. 2, art. 5,) "It is the promise of the Gospel, that whosoever believes in Christ crucified should not perish, but have everlasting life; which promise, together with the injunction of repentance and faith, ought promiscuously and without distinction, to be declared and published to all men and people to whom God in

his good pleasure sends the Gospel." But as some of the later Calvinists found themselves perplexed with this statement, they began to differ from the synod; and, allowing that Christ died for all whom he commands to believe in him, denied that God had commanded all men so to believe, (Vide Womack's Arcana Dogmatum, page 67.) These divines chose to fall on the opposite horn of the dilemma, and thus expressly to deny the word of God. Others have endeavored to escape the difficulty by making faith

in Christ a command of the moral law, under which even reprobates, as they take it, unquestionably are, and argue, that as by the principle of moral law, all are bound to believe every thing which God hath revealed, so by that law all are bound to believe in Christ, and, failing of that, are by the moral law justly condemned. It were easy, in answer to this, to show, that no man in the state of a reprobate, as they represent it, is under law of any kind, except a law of necessity to do evil; but waiving this, it were as easy

to prove, that, because the moral law obliges us, "in principle"

to do all which God commands, the command to the Jews to circumcise their children was a command of the moral law, as that to believe in Christ is a command of the moral law, because, in principle, it obliges us to believe what God has revealed. But should it be admitted that all are bound, by the moral law, to believe all that God reveals, yet, according to them, it is not revealed that Christ died for all; this we

contend for, but they contend against: all are not, upon that very principle, therefore, bound to believe that Christ died for them. Farther, those who hold this notion, contend that the moral law commands us to do a thing impossible, and contrary to truth; and thus they fall upon the other horn of the dilemma.

The last class of texts we have adduced in favor of general redemption consists of those which impute the blame and fault of their non-salvation to

men themselves. If Christ died for all men, so as to make their salvation practicable, then the fault, according to the doctrine of Scripture, lies in themselves; if he died not so for them that they may be saved, then the bar to their salvation lies out of themselves, and in the absence of any saving provision for them in the Gospel, which is contrary to the doctrine of Scripture.

We enter not now upon the questions of the invincibility of grace, and free and bound will. These

will come under consideration in their place; and we now confine ourselves to the argument, as it is grounded upon texts of this class as given above. The common reply to our argument, grounded upon these texts, at least among the more mode-rate kind of Calvinists, is, that the fault is indeed in the will of man, and that if men willed to come to Christ, that they might have life, they would have life; and thus, they would have it understood, that the argument is answered.

This, however, we deny: they have neither refuted it, nor escaped its force; and nothing which is thus apparently conceded weakens the force of the conclusion, that if the bar to men's salvation be wholly in themselves, it lies not in the want of a provision made for their salvation in the Gospel; and therefore they are so interested in the death of Christ, that they may be saved by it.

For let us put the case as to the non-elect, who are indeed the per-sons in

question. Either it is possible for them to will to come to Christ, and to believe in him; or it is not. If the former, then they may come to Christ, and believe in him, without obtaining life and salvation; for he can dispense these blessings only to those for whom he purchased them, which, it is contended, he did for the elect only. If the latter, then the bar to their salvation is not in themselves; but in that which makes it impossible for them to will to come to Christ, and to believe in him. If it be said,

that though this is impossible to them, yet that still the bar is in themselves, because it is in the obstinacy and perverseness of their own wills, we ask, whether the natural will of the elect is so much better than that of the reprobate, that by virtue of that better natural will, they come to Christ and believe in him? This they will deny, and ascribe their willing, and coming to Christ, and believing in him, to the influence only of Divine grace. It will follow then, from this, that the bar to this same kind of

willing, and believing, on the part of the reprobate, lies not in themselves, where the Scriptures constantly place it, and so charge it upon men as their fault, and the reason of their condemnation; but in something without them, even in the determination and decree of God not to bestow upon them that influence of his grace, by which this good will, and this power to believe in Christ, are wrought in the elect: which is precisely what the synod of Dort has affirmed. "This was the most free counsel, gracious

will, and intention of God the Father; that the lively and saving efficacy of the most precious death of his Son should manifest itself in all the elect, for the bestowing upon them only justifying faith; and bringing them infallibly by it unto eternal life." (Cap. 2, art. 8.) This doctrine cannot, therefore, be true; for the Scriptures plainly place the bar to the salvation of them that are lost, in themselves, a nd charge the fault only on the willful disobedience and unbelief of men; while this opinion places it in the

refusal, on the part of God, to bestow that grace upon the non-elect, by which alone the evil of their natural will can be removed.

Nor is this in the least remedied by arguing, that as Christ is rejected freely and voluntarily by the natural will of man, the guilt is still chargeable upon himself. For, not here to anticipate what may be said on the freedom of the will, it is confessed by Calvinists that the will of the reprobate is not free to choose to come to Christ,

and believe in him, since without grace, not even the elect can do this. But if it were free to choose Christ, and believe in him, the not doing it would not be chargeable upon them as a fault. For they do not reject Christ as a Savior, since he is not offered to them as such; and they sin not, by not believing, that is, by not trusting in Christ for salvation. For as it is not the will of God that they should so believe, they violate no command given to them to believe, unless it be held that God commands them to do that

which he wills they should not do; which is only absurdly to say that he wills, and he does not will the same thing. And seeing that his commands are the declarations of his will, if the command reaches to them, it is a declaration that he wills that concerning them, which, on this system, he does not will; and this contradiction all are bound to maintain, who charge the want of faith, as a fault upon those to whom the power of believing is not imparted.

But the argument from this class of texts is not exhausted. They not only place that bar and fault which prevents the salvation of men in themselves; but they as expressly exclude God from all participation in it, contrary to the doctrine before us. "He willeth all men to be saved;" he has "no pleasure in the death of him that dieth." "He sent his Son not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved;" and he invites all, beseeches all, obtests all, and makes even his

threatenings merciful, since he interposes them to prevent men from going on still in their trespasses, and involving themselves in final ruin.

Perhaps not many Calvinists in the present day are disposed to resort to the ancient subterfuge, of a secret and a revealed will of God; (2) and yet it is difficult to conceive how they can avoid admitting this notion, without totally denying that which is so clearly written, that God "'willeth all men to be saved, and to come to the

knowledge of the truth;' and that he commands, by his apostle, that prayers should be made "for all men." The universality of such declarations has already been established; and no way is left for escaping the difficulty in this direction. The incompatibility of such declarations, with the limited extent of Christ's death, is therefore obvious, unless the term "will" can be modified. But if God declares his will in absolute terms, while he has yet secret reserves of a contrary kind, (to say

nothing of the injury done by such a notion, to the character of the God of truth, whose words are without dross of falsehood, "as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times;") this is to will that all men may be saved in word, and yet not to will it in fact, which is in truth not to will it at all. No subtlety of distinction can reconcile this. Nor, according to this scheme of doctrine, can God in any way, will the salvation of the non-elect. It is only under one condition, that he wills the salvation of any

man: namely, through the death of Christ. His justice required this atonement for sin; and he could not will man to be saved to the dishonor of his justice. If then that atonement does not extend to all men, he cannot will the salvation of all men; for such of them as are not interested in this atonement, could not be saved consistently with his righteous administration, and he could not, therefore, will it. If, then, he wills the non-elect to be saved, in any sense, he must will this independently of Christ's sacrifice for sins; and if he

cannot will this for the reason just given, he cannot "will all men to be saved," which is contrary to the texts quoted: he cannot, therefor e, invite all to be saved; he cannot beseech all by his ministers to be reconciled to him; for these acts could only proceed from his willing them to be saved: and for the same reason, "all men"

ought not to be prayed for by those who hold this doctrine, since they assume, that it is not the will of God that all men should be saved. Thus they

repeal the apostle's precept, as well as the principle upon which it is built, by mere human authority; or else they so interpret the principle, as to impeach the truth of God, and so practice the precept, as to indulge reserves in their own mind, similar to those they feign to be in the mind of God. While, therefore, it remains on record, that "God willeth all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth;" and that he

"willeth not that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance," it must be concluded, that Christ died for all; and that the reason of the destruction of any part of our race lies not in the want of a provision for their salvation; not in any limitation of the purchase of Christ, and the administration of his grace, but in their obstinate rejection of both.

(2) The scholastic terms are voluntas signi, and voluntas bene placiti, a signified or revealed will,

and a will of pleasure or purpose.

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46 EXTENT OF THE ATONEMENT - CONTINUED

So far, then, we have advanced in this discussion as to show, that while no passage of Scripture can be adduced, or is even pretended to exist, which declares that Christ did not die equally for all men, there are numerous passages which explicitly, and in terms which cannot,

by any fair interpretation, be wrested from that meaning, declare the contrary; and that there are others, as numerous, which contain the doctrine by necessary implication and inference. To implication and inference the Calvinist divines also resort, and the more so, as they have not a direct text in favor of their scheme. It is necessary, therefore, in order to obtain a comprehensive view of this controversy, compressed into as narrow limits as possible, to examine those parts of Scripture which, according

to their inferential interpretations, limit not merely the actual, but the intentional efficacy of the death of Christ to the elect only.

The first are those passages which treat of persons, said to be elected, foreknown, and predestinated to the spiritual and celestial blessings of the new dispensation; and the argument from the texts in which these distinctions occur, is, that the persons so called, elected, foreknown, and predestinated, are, by that

very distinction, marked out as the only persons to whom the death of Christ intentionally extends.

We reserve it to another place to state the systematic views which the followers of Calvin, in their different shades of opinion, take of the doctrines of election, &c, lest our more simple inquiry into the sense of Scripture should be disturbed by extraneous topics; and we are now, therefore, merely called to consider, how far this argument, which is professedly drawn from

Scripture and not from metaphysical principles, is supported or refuted, by an examination of those portions of Holy Writ on which it is usually built: and it will not prove a difficult task to show, that, when fairly interpreted, they contain nothing which obliges us to narrow our interpretation of those passages which extend the benefit of the death of Christ to all mankind; and that, in some views, they strongly corroborate their most extended meaning. Of a Divine election, or choosing and separation

from others, we have three kinds mentioned in the Scriptures.

The first is the election of individuals to perform some particular and special service. Cyrus was

"elected" to rebuild the temple; the twelve apostles were "chosen," elected, to their office by Christ; St. Paul was a "chosen," or elected, "vessel," to be the apostle of the Gen-tiles. This kind of election to special office and service has, however, manifestly no relation to the limitation of eternal salvation, either

in respect of the persons themselves so chosen, or of others. With respect to themselves, it did not confer upon them an absolute security. One of the twelve elected apostles was Judas, who fell and was lost; and St. Paul confesses his own personal liability to become "a castaway," after all his zeal and abundant labors. With respect to others, the twelve apostles, and St. Paul afterward, were "elected" to preach the Gospel in order to the salvation of all to whom they had access.

The second kind of election which we find in Scripture, is the election of nations, or bodies of people, to eminent religious privileges, and in order to accomplish, by their superior illumination, the merciful purposes of God, in benefiting other nations or bodies of people. Thus the descendants of Abraham, the Jews, were chosen to receive special revelations of truth; and to be "the people of God," to be his visible Church, and publicly to observe and uphold his worship.

"The Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth." "The Lord had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you, above all people." It was especially on account of the application of the terms elect, chosen, and peculiar, to the Jewish people, that they were so familiarly used by the apostles in their epistles addressed to the believing Jews and Gentiles, then constituting the Church of Christ in

various places. For Christians were the subjects, also, of this second kind of election; the election of bodies of men to be the visible people and Church of God in the world, and to be endowed with peculiar privileges. Thus they became, though in a more special and exalted sense, the chosen people, the elect of God. We say in a more special sense, because as the entrance into the Jewish Church was by natural birth, and the entrance into the Christian Church, properly so called, is by

faith and a spiritual birth, these terms, although many became Christians by mere profession, and enjoyed various privileges in consequence of their people or nation being chosen to receive the Gospel, have generally respect, in the New Testament, to bodies of true believers, or to the whole body of true believers as such. They are not, therefore, to be interpreted, according to the scheme of Dr. Taylor, of Norwich, by the constitution of the Jewish,

but by the constitution of the Christian Church.

To understand the nature of this "election," as applied sometimes to particular bodies of Christians, as when St. Peter says, "the Church which is at Babylon, elected together with you,"

and sometimes to the whole body of believers every where; and also the reason of the frequent use of the term election, and of the occurrence of allusions to the fact, it is to be remembered, that a great religious revolution, so to

speak, had occurred in the age of the apostles; with the full import of which we cannot, without calling in the aid of a little reflection, be adequately impressed. This was no other than the abrogation of the church state of the Jews, which had continued for so many ages. They had been the only visible acknowledged people of God in all the nations of the earth; for whatever pious people might have existed in other nations, they were not, in the sight of men, and collectively, acknowledged as "the people of Jehovah."

They had no written revelations, no appointed ministry, no forms of authorized initiation into his Church and covenant, no appointed holy days, no sanctioned ritual. All these were peculiar to the Jews, who were, therefore, an elected and peculiar people. This distinguished honor they were about to lose.

They might have retained it, had they, by believing the Gospel, admitted the believing Gentiles of all nations to share it with them; but the great reason

of their peculiarity and election, as a nation, was terminated by the coming of the Messiah, who was to be "a light to lighten the Gentiles," as well as "the glory of his people Israel." Their pride and consequent unbelief resented this, which will explain their enmity to the believing part of the Gentiles, who, when that which St. Paul calls "the fellowship of the mystery" was fully explained, chiefly by the glorious ministry of that apostle himself, were called into this Church relation and state of visible

acknowledgment as the people of God, which the Jews had formerly enjoyed, and that with even a higher degree of glory, in proportion to the superior spirituality of the new dispensation. It was this doctrine which excited that strong irritation in the minds of the un-believing Jews, and in some partially Christianized ones, to which so many references are made in the New Testament.

They were "provoked," were made "jealous;" and were often roused to the

madness of persecuting opposition by it. There was then a new election of a new people of God, to be composed of Jews, not by virtue of their natural descent, but of their faith in Christ, and of Gentiles of all nations, also believing, and put, as believers; on equal ground with the believing Jews; and there was also a rejection, a reprobation, if the term please any one better; but not an absolute one: for the election was offered to the Jews first, in every place, by offering them the Gospel. Some embraced it,

and submitted to be the elect people of God, on the new ground of faith, instead of the old one of natural descent; and therefore the apostle, Rom. 11:7, calls the believing part of the Jews, "the election," in opposition to those who opposed this "election of grace," and still clung to their former and now repealed election as Jews and the descendants of Abraham;- "but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." The offer had been made to the whole nation; all might have joined the one body of

believing Jews and believing Gentiles; but the major part of them refused: they would not "come in to the supper;" they made

"light of it;" light of an election founded on faith, and which placed the relation of "the people of God" upon spiritual attainments, and offered to them only spiritual blessings. They were, therefore, deprived of election and Church relationship of every kind:- their temple was burned; their political state abolished; their

genealogies confounded; their worship annihilated; and all visible acknowledgment of them by God as a Church withdrawn, and transferred to a Church henceforward to be composed chiefly of Gentiles: and thus, says St. Paul, Rom. 10:19, "were fulfilled the words of Moses, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish (ignorant and idolatrous) people I will anger you."

It is easy now to see what is the import of the "calling" and "election" of the

Christian Church, as spoken of in the New Testament. It was not the calling and the electing of one nation in particular to succeed the Jews; but it was the calling and the electing of believers in all nations, wherever the Gospel should be preached, to be in reality what the Jews had been but typically, and, therefore, in an inferior degree, the visible Church of God, "his people," under Christ "the Head;" with an authenticated revelation; with an appointed ministry, never to be lost;

with authorized worship; with holy days and festivals; with instituted forms of initiation; and with special protection and favor.

This second kind of election being thus explained, we may inquire, whether any thing arises out of it, either as it respects the Jewish Church, or the Christian Church, which obliges us in any degree to limit the explicit declarations of Scripture, as to the universal extent of the

intentional benefit of the atonement of Christ.

With respect to the ancient election of the Jews to be the peculiar people and visible Church of God, we may observe,

1. That it did not argue such a limitation, of the saving mercy of God to them, as that their election secured the salvation of every Jew individually. This will be acknowledged by all; for, as the foundation of their Church state was their natural relation to Abraham, and our Lord, with allusion to

this, says to Nicodemus, "that which is born of the flesh is flesh," none of them could be saved by virtue of being "Jews outwardly."

2. That it did not argue, that sufficient, though not equal means of salvation, were not left to the non-elected Gentile nations. These were still a "law unto themselves;" and "in every nation,"

says St. Peter, "he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."

3. That, so far from the election of the Jewish nation arguing that the mercy of God was restrained from the Gentile nations, it is manifest that, great reason as the Almighty had to be provoked by their idolatries the election of the Jews was intended for their benefit also; that it was not only designed to preserve truth, but to diffuse it, and to countered the spread of superstition and idolatry. The miracles wrought from age to age among them, exalted "Jehovah"

above the gods of the heathen; rays of light from their sacred books and institutions spread far beyond themselves; the temple of Solomon had its court of the Gentiles, and the "stranger" from

"a far country" had access to it, and enjoyed his right of praying to the true God; their captivities and dispersions wondrously fulfilled the purposes of justice as to them, and of mercy as to the nations into which they were carried; and their whole history bore an illustrious

part in that series of the Divine dispensations by which the Gentile world was prepared for the coming of Christ, and the establishment of his religion. This subject has already been adverted to and illustrated in the first part of this work. Jerusalem was, in an inferior sense, literally "the joy of the whole earth;" and "in the seed of Abraham," all the nations of the earth have, in all ages, in some degree, been blessed.

With respect to the "election" of the Christian Church, we also observe.

1. That neither does its election suppose such a special grace of God, as secures infallibly the salvation of every one of its members; that is, in other words, of every elected person. For to pass over the case of these who are Christians but in name, even true Christians are exhorted to give diligence to make their "calling and election sure;" and are warned against "turning back to perdition." We have

also seen, in the case of the apostates mentioned in the Epistle to the Hebrews, that, in point of fact, some of those who had thus been actually elected, and brought into a state of salvation, had fallen away into a condition of extreme hazard, or of utter hopelessness.

2. That the election of Christians, as members of the Church of Christ, concludes nothing against the saving mercy of God being: still exercised as to those who are not of the Church. Even the Calvinists

cannot deny this; for many who are not now of the body of the visible and true Church of Christ, may, according to their scheme, be yet called and chosen into that body, and thus partake of an election which, while they are notoriously wicked and alien from the Church of Christ, they do not actually partake of, whatever may be the secret purposes of God concerning them.

3. That Christians are thus elected, and made the Church of God, not in consequence of others

being excluded from the compassions and redeeming mercy of Christ; but for their benefit and salvation, that they also may be called into the fellowship of the Gospel. "Ye are the light of the world;" "ye are the salt of the earth." But in what sense could the Church be "the light of the world," were there no capacity in the world to receive the same light with which it is itself enlightened? or "the salt of the earth," if it did not exist for the purifying of the mass beyond itself, with the same purity? Yet if

such a capacity exists in "the world," it is from the grace of God alone that it derives it, and not from nature; a grace which could be imparted to the world only in consequence of the death of Christ. Thus nothing is to be argued from the actual election of the Christian Church, as God's visible and acknowledged people on earth, in favor of the doctrine that election limits the benefits of our Lord's atonement; but, on the contrary, this election of the Church has, for one of its final causes, the

illumination of the world. But as Calvinistic commentators have so generally confounded this collective election with personal election, (a doctrine to which, in its proper place, we shall presently advert,) and have, in consequence, misunderstood and misinterpreted the argument of St. Paul, in the ninth, tenth, and eleventh chapters of his Epistle to the Romans; this celebrated discourse of the apostle requires to be briefly examined.

Let the reader, then, take the epistle in his hand, and follow the argument in these chapters, with reference to the determining of the two main questions at issue, namely, whether personal or collective election be the subject of the apostle's discourse; and whether the election, of which he speaks, of whatever kind it may be, is, in the sense of the Calvinists, unconditional.

Let us examine the discourse, first, with reference to the question of

personal or collective election.

It is acknowledged by all, that, whatever other subjects the apostle may or may not connect with it, he treats of the casting off of the Jews, as the visible Church of God, and the calling of the Gentiles into that relation. For the case of the Jews he expresses great "sorrow of heart;" not indeed because God had now determined to compose his visible Church upon a new principle, that of faith, and to constitute it no longer upon that of

natural descent from Abraham; for to announce this doctrine St. Paul was chosen to be an apostle, and to call, by earnest and extensive labors, not only the Gentiles, but the Jews thankfully to submit to it, by receiving the Gospel: but he had great "sorrow of heart," both on account of their having rejected this gracious offer, and of the calamities which the approaching destruction of their nation would bring upon them, verses 1, 2. The enumeration which he makes in verses 4 and 5, of the religious honors and

privileges of the. Jewish nation, while it remained a Church accomplishing the purposes of God, shows that he did not intend, by proclaiming the new foundation on which God would now construct his Church, and elect to himself a people out of all nations, to detract at all from the Divinity or glory of the Mosaic dispensation.

The objection made, in the minds of the Jews, to this doctrine of the abolition of the Jewish visible Church as founded upon descent from Abraham, in the line

of Isaac, was, as we may collect from verse 6, that it was contrary to the word and promise of God made to Abraham. This objection St. Paul first refutes:- "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect,"

literally "has fallen," or "fallen to the ground," that is, has not been accomplished; or as though this election of a new Church, composed only of believing Jews and Gentiles, was contrary to the promises made to Abraham, Gen. 17:7, 8, "I will establish my covenant

between me and thee, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee." This he proves, from several events, which the Jews could not deny, as being in the records of their own history. By these facts he shows, that the exclusion of a part of the seed of Abraham, at various times, from being the visible Church of God, was not, as the Jews themselves must allow, any violation of the covenant with Abraham. He first instances the case of the descendants of Jacob himself, although he was

the son of Isaac. "All are not Israel, (God's visible Church and acknowledged people,) who are of Israel," or Jacob; for a great part of the ten tribes who had been carried into captivity before the Babylonian invasion of Judah, had never returned, had never been again collected into a people, and had, for ages, been cast out of their ancient Church state and relation, though, by natural descent, they were "of Israel," that is, descendants of Jacob.

From Jacob he ascends to Abraham, verse 7: "Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children," that is Abraham's "seed" in the sense of the promise; "but in Isaac" not in Ishmael, "shall thy seed be called;" "that is, they which are the children of the flesh," Ishmael by Hagar, and his descendants, "these are not the children of God. But the children of the promise,"

Isaac, born of Sarah, and his descendants "are counted for the seed,"

meaning, obviously, for that seed to whom the promise refers. He gives a third instance of this election and exclusion taken from the children of Isaac, ver. 10-13, "And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; (for the children being not yet born, neither having done good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election," the election of one in preference to the other," might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) it was said unto her, The

elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." On this last passage, so often perverted to serve the system of Calvinian election and reprobation, a few remarks more at large may be allowed.

1. The argument of the apostle, of which this instance is in continuance requires us to understand that he is still speaking of "the seed" intended in the promise, which did not comprise all the descendants either of

Abraham, or Isaac, or Jacob, for he brings instances of exclusion from each; but such as God elected to be his visible Church: he is not therefore speaking of the personal election or rejection of Isaac, or Ishmael, or Jacob, or Esau; but of their descendants in certain lines, as elected to be the acknowledged Church of God.

2. This is proved, also, from those passages in the history of Moses, which furnish the facts on which the apostle reasons, and

which he quotes briefly as being well known to the Jews. "As it is written, The elder shall serve the younger," Now this is written, Gen. 25:23, "Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other PEOPLE; and the elder," the descendants of the elder, "shall serve the younger." So far, indeed, was this prophecy from being in tended of Esau personally, that he himself did never serve his brother Jacob, although he

wantonly surrendered to him his birthright. Another passage is found in the Prophet Malachi 1:2,3, and expresses God's dealings, not with the individuals Jacob and Esau; but with their descendants, who, according to frequent usage in Scripture, are called by the names of their first ancestors. "Was not Esau Jacob's brother yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness!" judgments which fell not upon Esau

personally, but upon the Edomites his descendants.

3. If the apostle, in this instance of Jacob and Esau, speaks of the rejection or reprobation of individuals, he says nothing at all to his purpose, because he is discoursing of the rejection of the Jews, as a nation, from being any longer the visible and acknowledged Church of God in the world; so that instances of individual reprobation would have been impertinent to his purpose.

But to proceed with the apostle's discourse.

Having shown, by these instances, that God had limited the covenant to a part of the descendants of Abraham, at different periods, he puts it to the objecting Jews to say, whether, on that account, there was a failure of his covenant with Abraham; "What shall we say then, Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid." The word unrighteousness is usually taken in the sense of injustice, but is sometimes used in the sense of falsehood and unfaithfulness, by the writers of the New

Testament, as well as by the LXX; and in this sense it well agrees with the apostle's reasoning; "Is there then unfaithfulness with God," because he has so frequently limited the promise made to the seed of Abraham, to particular branches of that seed? The apostle denies that in this there was any unfaithfulness, or, in the sense of injustice, which perhaps is to be preferred, any "unrighteousness in God;" and the Jews themselves are bound to agree with him, since, as the apostle adds, it was a

general principle laid down in their own law, by the Lawgiver himself when speaking to Moses, and by which, therefore, all such promises of special favor must be interpreted, - "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." The connection of these words as they stand in Exodus 33:19, shows that the mercy and grace here spoken of, refer not, as Beza would have it, to that mercy exercised to individuals which supposes misery, and consists in the

exercise of pardon; but to the granting of special favors and privileges. For the words are spoken to Moses, in answer to his prayer, "I beseech thee, show me thy glory." To him God had before said, verse 17, "Thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by thy name." He was not, therefore, in the case of a guilty, miserable man. Nor do the words refer to the forgiveness of the people at his intercession. This had been done; the transaction, as to them, had been finished, as the history shows; and then

Moses, encouraged by the success of his intercessions for them, makes a bold but wholly personal request for himself. "And he said, I beseech thee, show me thy glory. And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the lord before thee; and will be gracious," in showing these great condescension, "to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy." God has a right to select whom he pleases to enjoy special privileges; in this there is no

"unrighteousness," and, therefore, in limiting those favors to such branches of Abraham's seed, as he chose to elect, neither his justice nor his truth was impeached. This is obvious, when the words are interpreted of the election of collective bodies of men, and of the individuals which compose them, to peculiar favors and religious privileges; while yet all others have still the means of salvation. The onus lies only upon them who interpret this part of Scripture of personal, unconditional election and

reprobation, to show how it can be a "righteous" proceeding to punish men for not availing themselves of means of salvation which are never afforded them. This is manifestly

"unrighteous;" but in the election and rejection spoken of by the apostle, he expressly denies that there is "unrighteousness with GOD;" he does this in a solemn manner, "God forbid:" and, therefore, the kind of election and rejection of which he speaks is not the unconditional election and

reprobation of individuals to or from eternal salvation.

The conclusion of the apostle's answer to the objection of the Jews, that the casting off a part of the Jewish nation, even all who did not believe in Christ, was contrary to the promises made to Abraham, is, "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." He grants special favors, as the term "showing mercy," in the preceding verse, has been already proved to

mean; and in granting these special favors he often acts contrary to the designs and efforts of men, and frustrates both. The allusion contained in these words, to the case of Isaac and Esau, is, therefore, highly beautiful and appropriate, - "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth." Isaac willed that Esau, the first born, should have the blessing; and Esau ran for the venison as the means of obtaining it; but still Jacob obtained it. The blessing was not, however, a personal one, but referred

to the people of whom Jacob was to be the progenitor, as the history given by Moses will show. Thus this case also affords no example of personal election.

The apostle having proved that there was neither unfaithfulness nor unrighteousness in God, in selecting from his own good pleasure, from his sovereignty if the term please better, the persons to be endowed with special religious honors and privileges, proceeds to show, with reference, not

only to the exclusion of the Jews, as a nation, from the visible Church, but also to the terrible judgments which our Lord himself had predicted, and which were about to come upon them, that he exercises also the prerogative of making some notorious sinners, and especially when they set themselves to oppose his purposes, the eminent and unequivocal objects of his displeasure. Here again he uses for illustration an example taken from the Jewish Scriptures. But let the example be marked. Had it been his intention to

show, that the personal election of Isaac and Jacob necessarily implied the personal reprobation of Ishmael and Esau; and that their not receiving special privileges necessarily cut them off from salvation, so that being left to themselves they became objects of wrath, then would he have selected them as his illustrative examples, for this would have been required by his argument. But he selects Pharaoh, not a descendant of Abraham; a person not involved in the cases of non-election which had

taken place in Abraham's family; but a notoriously wicked prince, and one who resolved to oppose himself to the designs of God in the deliverance of Israel from bondage. His doctrine, then, manifestly is, that when these two characters meet in individuals, or in nations, notorious vice and flagrant opposition to God's plans and purposes, he often makes them the objects of his special displeasure; giving them up to the hardness of their hearts, and postponing their destruction to make it

more impressively manifest to the world. In every respect Pharaoh was a most appropriate example to illustrate the case of the body of the unbelieving Jews, who, when the apostle wrote, were under the sentence of a terrible excision. Pharaoh had several times hardened his own heart; now God hardens it, that is, in Scripture language, withdraws his all-gracious interposition, and gives him up. So the Jews had hardened their hearts against repeated calls of Christ and his apostles;

now God was about to give them up, as a nation, to destruction. Pharaoh was not suddenly cut off, but was spared; "for this same purpose have I raised thee up" from the effect of so many plagues; that is, I have not destroyed thee outright. The LXX translate, "thou hast been preserved;" for the Hebrew word rendered by us, "raised up," never signifies to bring a person or thing into being, but to preserve, support, establish, or make to stand. Thus, also, the Jews had not been instantly cut off; but had

been "endured with much long suffering," to give them an opportunity of repentance, of which many availed themselves; and the remainder were still endured, though they were filling up the measure of their iniquities, and would, in the end, but by their own fault, display more eminently, the justice and severity of God. Pharaoh's crowning offence was his rebellious opposition to the designs of God in taking Israel out of Egypt, and establishing them in Canaan as an independent nation, and as the Church

of God; the Jews filled up the measure of their iniquities by endeavoring to withstand the purpose of God as to the Gentiles; his purpose to elect a Church, composed of both Jews and Gentiles, only on the ground of faith, and this made the cases parallel. Therefore, says the apostle, it follows from all these examples, that "he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy," gives special religious advantages to those whom he wills to elect for this purpose; "and whom he will," whom he chooses to select as

examples from among notorious sinners who rebelliously oppose his designs, "he hardeneth," or gives up to a hardness which they themselves have cherished. In verse 19, the Jew is again introduced as an objector. "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resiste d his will?" and to this St. Paul answers, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?

Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?"

verse 20. The usual way in which the objection is explained, by non-Calvinistic commentators, is;- if the continuance of the Jews in a state of disobedience, was the consequence of the determination of God to leave them to themselves, why should God still find fault? If they had become obdurate by the judicial withholding of his grace, why should the Jews still be blamed, since his will had not been resisted, but accomplished? If this be the sense of the objection, then the import of the

apostle's answer will be, that it is both perverse and wicked for a nation justly given up to obduracy, "to reply against God," or "debate" the case with him; and that it ought silently at least to submit to its penal dereliction, recollecting that God has an absolute power over nations, not only to raise them to peculiar honors and privileges, and to take them away, as "the potter has power over the clay to make one vessel to honor, and another to dishonor;" but to leave them to fill up the measure of their sins,

that his judgments may be the more conspicuous. That this is a better and more consistent sense than that forced upon these words by Calvinistic commentators, may be freely admitted; but it is not wholly satisfactory.

For, 1. One sees not what can be expected from a people judicially given up, but a "replying against God;" or what end is to be answered by taking any pains to teach a people, in this hopeless case, not "to reply against God," but to

suffer his judgments in silence.

2. As little discoverable, if this be the meaning, is the appropriate, ness of the apostle's allusion to the parable of the potter in Jeremiah, chap. 18. There almighty God declares his absolute power over nations to give them what form and condition he pleases; but still under these rules, that he repents of the evil which he threatens against wicked nations, when they repent, and withdraws his blessings from them when

they are abused. But this illustration is surely not appropriate to the case of a nation given up to final obduracy, because the parable of the potter supposes the time of trial, as to such nations, not yet passed. "O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel. At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation,

against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them." There is here no allusion to nations being kepi in a state of judicial dereliction and obduracy, in order to make their punishment more conspicuous.

3. When the apostle speaks of the potter making of the "same lump, one vessel to honor and another to dishonor? the last term does not fully apply to the state of a people devoted to inevitable destruction. It is true, that in a following verse he speaks of "vessels of wrath fitted to destruction;" but that is in another view of the case of the Jews, as we shall immediately show; nor does he affirm that they were "fitted to destruction" by God. There he speaks of what men fit themselves for; or that fitness for the

infliction of the Divine wrath upon them, which they themselves, by their perverseness, create. - Here he speaks of an act of God, using the figure of a potter forming some vessels "to honor, others to dishonor." But dishonor is not destruction. No potter makes vessels to destroy them; and we may be certain, that when Jeremiah went down to the potter's house, to see him work the clay upon "the wheel," that the potter was not employed in forming vessels to destroy them. On the contrary, says the

prophet, when the lump of clay was

"marred in his hand;" so that not for want of skill in himself, but of proper quality in the clay, it took not the form he designed, of the same lump he made "another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to make it;" - a meaner vessel, as the inferior quality or temper of the clay admitted, instead of that finer and more ornamental form which it would not take. The application of this was natural and easy to the

house of Israel. It had become a lump of marred clay in the hands of the potter, which answered not to his design, and yielded not to his will. This illustrated the case of the Jews previous to the captivity of Babylon: they were marred in his hand, they were not answering the design for which he made them a people; but then the potter gave the stubborn clay another, though a baser form, and did not cast it away from him: he put the Jews into the condition of slaves and captives in a strange land,

and reduced them from their honorable rank among the nations. This might have been averted by their repentance; but when the clay became utterly "marred," it was turned into this inferior and less honorable form and state. But all this was not excision; not destruction. The proceeding was corrective, as well as punitive; it brought them to repentance in Babylon; and God "repented him of the evil." The potter took even that vessel which had been made unto dishonor for seventy years, and

made of it again "a vessel unto honor," by restoring the polity and Church relation of the Jews.

4. The interpretation to which these objections are made, also supposes that the body of the Jewish nation had arrived at a state of dereliction already. But this epistle was written several years before the destruction of Jerusalem; and although the threatening had gone forth, as to the dereliction and "hardening" of the perseveringly impenitent, it is plain, from the labors of

the apostle himself to convert the Jews every where, and from his "prayers, that Israel might be saved," chap. 10:1; that he did not consider them, as yet at least, in this condition; though most of them, and especially those in Judea, were hastening to it.

Let us then take a view of this part of the apostle's discourse, in some respects different. The objecting Jew, upon the apostle having stated that God shows mercy, or special favor to whom he will, and

selects out of the mass of sinners whom he pleases, for marked and eminent punishment, says,"Why doth he yet find fault?" "Why does he, by you, his messenger, allowing you your apostolic commission, continue to reprove and blame the Jews? for who hath resisted his will?" According to your own doctrine, he chooses the Gentiles and rejects us; his will is accomplished, not resisted! "why then doth he still find fault?" We may grant that the objection of the Jew goes upon the Calvinistic view of

sovereignty and predestination, and the shutting out of all conditions; but then it is to be remembered, that it is the objection of a perverse and unbelieving Jew; and that it is refuted, not conceded, by the apostle; for he proceeds wholly to cut off all ground and pretence of "replying against God," by his reference to the parable of the potter in Jeremiah. This reference, according to the view we have already given of that parable, shows, 1. That "the vessel" was not made "unto

dishonor," until the clay of which it was formed, had been "marred in the hand of the potter;" that is, not until trial being made, it did not conform to his design; did not work according to the pattern in his mind. This is immediately explained by the prophet; the nation did not "repent," and "turn from its wickedness," and therefore God dealt with them "as seemed good" to him. Thus, in the time of the apostle, the Jewish nation was the clay marred in the hands of God, - From its stubbornness and want

of temper, it had not conformed to his design of bringing it to the honorable form of a Christian Church, in association with the Gentiles. It was therefore made "a vessel unto dishonor," unchurched, and disowned of God, as its forefathers had been in Babylon. This was the dishonored, degraded condition, of all the unbelieving Jews in the apostle's day, although the destruction of their city, and temple, and polity, had not taken place. They were rejected from being the visible Church of God from

the rending of the veil of the temple, or at least, from the day of pentecost, when God visibly took possession of his new spiritual Church, by the descent of the Holy Ghost. But all this was their own "fault;" and therefore, notwithstanding the objection of the perverse Jew, "fault" might be found with them who refused the glory of a higher Church estate than that which their circumcision formerly gave; and which had been so long and so affectionately offered to them; with men who, not only would not enter "the

kingdom of God" themselves, but attempted to hinder even the Gentiles from entering in, as far as lay in their power.

2. The reference to the parable of the potter served to silence their "replying against God" also; because, in the interpretation which Jeremiah gives of that parable, he represents even the vessel formed unto dishonor, out of the mass which was "marred in the hand of the potter," as still within the reach of the Divine favor, upon repentance; and so the

conduct of God to the Jews, instead of proceeding as the Jew in his objection supposes, upon rigid predestinarian and unconditional grounds, left their state still in their own hands: they had no need to remain vessels of dishonor, since the Christian Church was still open to them, with its higher than Jewish honors. The word of the Lord, by his prophet, immediately on his having visited the potter's house, declares that if a nation "repent," he will repent of the evil designed against, or brought upon it. The

Jews in Babylon, although they were there in the form of dishonored vessels, did repent; and' of that dishonored mass "vessels of honor" were again made, at their restoration to their own land. Instead of replying against God, they bowed to his judgments in silence; and, as we read in the prayer of Daniel, confessed them just. Every Jew had this option when the apostle wrote, and has it now; and therefore St. Paul does not here call upon the Jews, as persons hardened and derelict of God, to be silent, and own

the justice of God; but as persons whose silent submission would be the first step to their recovery. Nor will they always, even as a people, remain vessels of dishonor; but be formed again on the potter's wheel as vessels of honor and glory, of which the return from Babylon was probably a type. The object of the apostle was, therefore, to silence a rebellious and perverse replying against God, by producing a conviction, both of his sovereign right to dispense his favors as he pleases, and of his justice in

inflicting punishments upon those who set themselves against his designs; and thus to bring the Jews to repentance.

3. What follows verse 22 serves farther, and by another view, to silence the objecting Jew. It was true, that the body of the Jewish people in Judea, and their polity would be destroyed: our Lord had predicted it; and the apostles frequently, but tenderly, advert to it. This prediction did not, however, prove that the Jews were, at the time the apostle wrote,

generally, in a state of entire and hopeless dereliction; or the apostle would not so earnestly have sought, and so fervently have prayed for their salvation. Nor did that event itself prove, that those who still remained, and to this day remain, were given up entirely by God; for if so, why should the Church have been, in all ages, taught to look for their restoration: no time being fixed, and no signs established, to enable us to conclude that the dereliction had been taken off? The temporal

punishment of the Jews of Judea had no connection with the question of their salvability as a people. To this sad: national event, however, the apostle adverts, in the next verses. - "What," or beside, "if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long suffering, the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had before prepared to glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews

only, but also of the Gentiles. As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people, who were not my people," &c, ver. 22-25. The apostle does not state his conclusion, but leaves it to be understood. He intended it manifestly, farther to silence the perverse objections of the Jews; and he gives it as a proof, not of sovereignty alone, but of sovereignty and justice, sovereign mercy to the Gentiles; but justice to the Jews: as though he had said, this procedure is also righteous,

and leaves no room to reply against God.

The metaphor of "vessels" is still carried on; but by "vessels of dishonor, formed by the potter,"

and "vessels of wrath, fitted for destruction," he does not mean vessels in the same condition; but in different conditions. This is plain, from the difference of expression adopted - "vessels unto dishonor," and "vessels of wrath, - "but as the apostle's reasoning is evidently influenced by the reference he has made to the

parables of the potter, in the eighteenth and nineteenth chapters of Jeremiah, we must again refer to that prophecy for illustration. In all the examples which, in this discourse, St. Paul takes out of the Old Testament, it has been justly observed by critics, that he quotes briefly, and only so as to give to the Jews, who were well acquainted with their Scriptures, the key to the whole context in which the passages stand to which he directs their attention. So in the verses before us, by referring to the potter

forming the vessels on the wheel, he directs them to the whole section of prophecy, of which that is the introduction. By examining this it will be found, that the prophet, in delivering his message, makes use of the work of the potter for illustration, in two states, and for two purposes. The first we have explained:- the giving to the mass, marred in the hands of the potter, another form; which expressed that dishonored, and humbled state, in which the Jews, both for punishment and

correction, were placed under captivity in Babylon. But connected with the humbling of this proud people, by rejecting them for seventy years, as God's visible Church, was also the terrible destruction of Jerusalem, and the temple itself. With reference to this, the prophet, in the nineteenth chapter, which is a continuation of the eighteenth, receives this command, "Thus saith the Lord, Go and get a potter's earthen bottle, and take of the ancients of the people, and the ancients of the priests;"and go forth unto

the valley of the sons of Hinnom, which is by the entry of the east gate, and proclaim there the words that I shall tell thee, and say, Hear ye the word of the Lord, O

kings of Judah, and inhabitants of Jerusalem; Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; behold I will bring evil upon this place, the which whosoever heareth, his ears shall tingle." And then having delivered his awful message in various forms of malediction, he is thus commanded, in verse 10,

"Then shalt thou break the bottle in the sight of the men that go with thee, and shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; even so will I break this people and this city, as one breaketh a potter's vessel, that cannot be made whole again." As this stands in the same section of prophecy as the parable of the forming of vessels out of clay by the potter, can it be doubted to what the apostle refers when he speaks, not only of " vessels made unto dishonour," but also of

"vessels of wrath fitted for destruction? The potter's earthen bottle, broken by Jeremiah, was "a vessel of wrath fitted for destruction," though not in the intention of the potter who formed it; and the breaking or destruction of it represented, as the prophet himself says, the destruction of the city, temple, and polity of the Jews, by the invasion of the forces of the king of Babylon. The coming destruction of the temple, city, and polity of the Jews by the Romans was thereby fitly represented by the

same figure in words, that is, the destruction of an earthen vessel by violent fracture, as the former calamity had been represented by it in action. Farther, the circumstances of these two great national punishments signally answer to each other. In the former, the Jews ceased to be the visible Church of God for seventy years; in the latter, they have been also unchurched for many ages. Their temporary rejection as the visible Church of God when they were taken into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar, was

marked, also, by circumstances of severe and terrible vengeance, by invasion, and the destruction of their political state. Their longer rejection, as God's Church, was also ac. companied by judgments of the same kind, and by their more terrible excision and dispersion, as a body politic. As the prophet refers to both circumstances, so, in his usual manner of teaching by action, he illustrates both by symbols. The first, by the work of the potter on the wheels; the second,

by taking "an earthen bottle, a vessel out of the house of the potter, and destroying it before the eyes of the ancients of the people and the ancients of the priests." The apostle, in like manner, refers to both events, and makes use of the same symbols verbally. The "dishonored" state of the Jews, as no longer acknowledged by God as his people, since they would not enter the new Church, the New Jerusalem, by faith, is shown by the vessel formed by the potter unto "dishonor;" the collateral

calamities brought upon their city, temple, and nation, arising out of their enormous sins, is shown by allusion to the prophet's breaking another vessel, an earthen bottle. This temporal destruction of the Jews by the Roman invasion was also figurative of the future and final punishment of all persevering unbelievers. As to the Jews of that day living in Judea, the nation of the Jews, the punishment figured by the broken vessel was final, for they were destroyed by the sword, and wasted by

slavery; and as to all who persevered in unbelief, the future punishment in eternity would be final and hopeless, "as one breaketh a potter's vessel that cannot be made whole again:" a sufficient proof that St. Paul is not speaking of the vessel in its state of clay, on the potter's wheel, which might be made whole again; and, therefore, the punishment figured by that was not final, but corrective; for the Jews, though made vessels unto dishonor in Babylon, were again made vessels of honor on their restoration;

and the Jews now, though for a much longer period existing as "vessels of dishonor,"

shall be finally restored, brought into the Church of Christ, acknowledged to be his people, as the believing Gentiles are, and thus, united with them, again be made "vessels unto honor."

The application of the apostle's words, in the verses just commented upon, as intended to silence the "replying" of the Jews against God, is now obvious. They could urge no charge upon God for

making them vessels of dishonor by taking away their Church state, for that was their own fault; they were "marred in his hands," and they yielded not to his design. But their case was no more hopeless than that of the Jews in Babylon; they might still be again made vessels of honor. And then, as to the case of the "vessels of wrath filled for destruction," those stubborn Jews who were bringing upon themselves the Roman invasion, with the destruction of their city and nation; and all

perverse, unbelieving Jews, who continued, in other parts of the world, to reject the Gospel; although their approaching punishment would be final and remediless, yet was there no ground for them "to reply against God" on that account, as though this dispensation of wrath were the result of unconditional predestination and rigid sovereignty. On the contrary, it was an act of pure and unquestionable justice, which the apostle proves by its being brought upon themselves by their own sins; and by the

circumstance that it did not take place until after God had "endured them with much long suffering."

1. The destruction was brought upon themselves by their own sins, This is manifest from all the instances in the New Testament, in which their sins are charged upon them as the cause of their calamities, and which need not be quoted; and also from the expression in the text before us, vessels "fitted to destruction." The word might as well have been rendered "adapted to

destruction," which fitness or congruity for punishment can be produced only by sin; and this sin must have been their own choice and fault, unless we should blasphemously make God the author of sin, which but a few Calvinistic divines have been bold enough to affirm. Nor are we to overlook the change of speech which the apostle uses (Wolfus in loc.) when speaking of "the vessels of mercy." Their "preparation unto glory," is ascribed expressly to God, - "which he had afore prepared unto

glory;" but of the vessels of wrath the apostle simply says passively, "fitted to destruction," leaving the agent to be inferred from the nature of the thing, and from the testimony of Scripture, which uniformly ascribes the sins of men to them selves, and their punishment to their sins.

2. The justice of God's proceeding as to the incorrigible Jews is still more strongly marked by the declaration, that these vessels of wrath fitted, or adapted to destruction, were "endured with much

long suffering." To say that their punishment was delayed to render it more conspicuous, after they had been left or given up by God, would be no impeachment of God's justice; but it is much more consonant to the tenor of Scripture to consider the "long suffering" here mentioned, as exercised previously to their being given up to the hardness of their hearts, like Pharaoh, and even after they were, in a rigid construction of just severity, "fitted for destruction:" the punishment being delayed

to afford them still farther opportunities for repentance. The barren tree, in our Lord's parable, was the emblem of the Jewish nation, and no one can deny that after the Lord had come for many years "seeking fruit and finding none," this fruitless tree was

"fitted" to be cut down; and yet it was "endured with much long suffering." This view is, also, farther supported by the import of the word "long suffering," and its use in the New Testament.

Long suffering is a mode of mercy, and the reason of its exercise is only to be found in a merciful intention. Hence "goodness and forbearance, and long suffering," are united by the apostle, in another part of this epistle, when speaking of these very Jews, in a passage which may be considered as strictly parallel with that before us. "Or despises thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance, and long suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy

hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of GOD;" which "wrath" the long suffering of God was exercised to prevent, by leading them "to repentance," Rom. 2:4, 5. So also St, Peter teaches us, that the end of God's long suffering to men is a merciful one: he is "long suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance"

The passage in question, therefore, cannot be understood of persons derelict and forsaken of God, as though the long suffering of God, in enduring them, were a part of the process of

"showing his wrath and making his power known." Doddridge, a moderate Calvinist, paraphrases it: "What if God, resolving" at last "to manifest his wrath, and make his power known, hath," in the meantime, "endured with much long suffering" those who shall finally appear to

be "the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction?" to which there is no objection, provided it be allowed that in this "meantime" they might have repented and obtained mercy.

Thus the proceedings of God as to the Jews shut out all "reply" and "debate" with God. Nothing was unjust in his conduct to the impenitent among them, for they were "vessels of wrath fitted for destruction," wicked men, justly liable to it, and yet, before God proceeded to his work of judgment, he

endured them with forbearance, and gave them many opportunities of coming into his Church on the new election of believers both of Jews and Gentiles. And as to this election, the whole was a question not of justice but of grace, and God had the unquestionable right of forming a new believing people, "not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles," and of filling them, as "vessels of honor," with those riches, that fullness of glory, as his now acknowledged Church, for which he had "afore

prepared them" by faith, the only ground of their admission into his covenant. The remainder of the chapter, on which we have commented, contains citations from the prophecies, with respect to the salvation of the "remnant," of the believing Jews, and the calling of the Gentiles. The tenth and eleventh chapters which continue the discourse, need no particular examination; but will be found to contain nothing but what most obviously refers to the collective rejection of the Jewish

nation, and the collective election of the "remnant" of believing Jews, along with all believing Gentiles, into the visible Church of God.

We have now considered this discourse of the Apostle Paul, with reference to the question of personal or collective election, and find that it can be interpreted only of the latter. Let us consider it, secondly, with reference to the question of unconditional election, a doctrine which we shall certainly find in it; but in a sense very different from

that in which it is held by Calvinists.

By unconditional election, divines of this class understand an election of persons to eternal life without respect to their faith or obedience, these qualities in them being supposed necessarily to follow as consequences of their election; by unconditional reprobation, the counterpart of the former doctrine, is meant a non-election or rejection of certain persons from eternal salvation; unbelief and disobedience following

this rejection as necessary consequences. Such kind of election and rejection has no place in this chapter, although the subject of it is the election and rejection of bodies of men, which is a case more unfettered with conditions than any other. We have, indeed, in it several instances of unconditional election. Such was that of the descendants of Isaac to be God's visible Church, in preference to those of Ishmael; such was that of Jacob, to the exclusion of Esau; which election was declared when the children

were yet in the womb, before they had done "good or evil;" so that the blessing of the special covenant did not descend upon the posterity of Jacob because of any righteousness in Jacob, nor was it taken away from the descendants of Esau because of any wickedness in their progenitor. In like manner, when almighty God determined no longer to found his visible Church upon natural descent from Abraham in the line of Isaac and Jacob, nor in any line according to the flesh; but to make faith in his Son

Jesus Christ the gate of admission into this privilege, he acted according to the same sovereign pleasure. It is not impossible to conceive that he might have carried on his saving purposes among the Gentiles through Christ, without setting up a visible Church among them; as, before the coming of Christ, he carried on such purposes in the Gentile nations, (unless we suppose that all but the Jews perished,) without collecting them into a body, and making himself their head as his Church, and

calling himself "their God" by special covenant, and by visible and constant signs acknowledging them to be "his people." Greatly inferior would have been the mercy to the Gentile world had this plan been adopted; and, as far as it appears to us, the system of Christianity would have been much less efficient. We are, indeed, bound to believe this, since Divine wisdom and goodness have determined on another mode of procedure; but still it is conceivable. On the contrary, the purpose of God was now not only to

continue a visible Church in the world, but to extend it in its visible, collective, and organized form, into all nations. Yet this resolve rested on no goodness in those who were to be subjects of it: both Jews and Gentiles were "concluded under sin," and "the whole world was guilty before God." As this plan is carried into effect by extending itself into different nations, we see the same sovereign pleasure.

A man of Macedonia appears to Paul in a vision

by night, and cries, "Come over and help us;"

but we have no reason to believe that the Macedonians were better than other Gentiles, although they were elected to the enjoyment of the privileges and advantages of evangelical ordinances.

So in modern times parts of Hindostan have been elected to receive the Gospel, and yet its inhabitants presented nothing more worthy of this election than the people of Tibet, or California, who have not

yet been elected. We call this sovereignty; not indeed in the sense of many Calvinistic writers, who appear to understand by the sovereign acts of God those procedures which he adopts only to show that he has the power to execute them; but because the reasons of them, whether they are reasons of judgment, or wisdom, or mercy, are hidden from us- either that we have no immediate interest in them, or that they are too deep and ample for our comprehension, or because

it is an important lesson for men to be taught to bow with reverent submission to his regal prerogatives. This is the unconditional election and non-election taught by the apostle in this chapter, but what we deny is, that either the spiritual blessings connected with religious privileges follow as necessary consequences from this election; or that unbelief, disobedience, and eternal ruin follow in the same manner from non-election. Of both these opinions the apostle's

discourse itself furnishes abundant refutation.

Let us take the instances of election. The descendants of Abraham in the line of Isaac and Jacob were elected; but true faith, and obedience, and salvation, did not follow as infallible consequents of that election. On the contrary, the "Jew outwardly," and the "Jew inwardly," were always distinguished in the sight of God; and the children of Abraham's faith, not the children of Abraham's body, were the true "Israel of God." Again,

the Gentiles were at length elected to be the visible Church of God; but obedience and salvation did not follow as necessary consequents of this election. On the contrary, many Gentiles chosen to special religious privileges have, in all ages, neglected the great salvation, and have perished, though professing the name of Christ; and in that pure age in which St. Paul wrote, when comparatively few Gentiles entered the Church but with a sincere faith in Christ, he warns all of the danger of excision

for unbelief and disobedience:- "Thou standest by faith; be not high minded, but fear." "For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee." "Toward thee goodness, if thou continue in his goodness; otherwise thou also shalt be cut off." Certain, therefore, it is, that although this collective election of bodies of men to religious privileges, and to become the visible Church of God, be unconditional, the salvation to which these privileges were designed to lead, depends

upon personal faith and obedience.

Let us turn, then, to the instances of non-election or rejection; and here it will be found that unbelief, disobedience, and punishment, do not follow as infallible consequents of this dispensation. Abraham was greatly interested for Ishmael, and obtained, in answer to his prayer, at least temporal promises in his behalf, and in that of his posterity; and there is no reason to conclude from any thing which occurs in the sacred writers, that his

Arabian descendants were shut out, except by their own choice and fault, at any time, from the hopes of salvation; at least previous to their embracing the imposture of Mohammed; for if so, we must give up Job and his friends as reprobates. The know, ledge of the true God existed long in Arabia; and "Arabians"

were among the fruits of primitive Christianity, as we learn from the Acts of the Apostles.

Nor have we any ground to conclude that the

Edomites, as such, were excluded from the mercies of God, because of their non-election as his visible Church. Their proximity to the Jewish nation must have served to preserve among them a considerable degree of religious knowledge; and their continuance as a people for many ages may argue at least no great enormity of wickedness among them; which is confirmed by the reasons given for their ultimate destruction. The final malediction against this people is uttered by the Prophet Malachi:-

"Whereas Edom saith, We are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places; thus saith the Lord of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down; and they shall call them the border of wickedness, and the people against whom the Lord hath indignation for ever," 1:4. Thus their destruction was the result of their "wickedness" in the later periods of their history; nor have we any reason to conclude that this was more inevitable than that of other ancient nations, whom God, as in the case

of Assyria, called to repentance; but who, not regarding the call, were finally destroyed.

That the Edomites were not, in more ancient times, the objects of the Divine displeasure, is manifest from Deut. 2:5, where it is recorded that God commanded the Israelites, "Meddle not with them; for I will not give you of their land, no, not so much as a foot breadth; because I have given Mount Seir unto Esau for a pos. session." They also outlived, as a people, the ten tribes of

Israel; they continued to exist when the two tribes were carried into captivity to Babylon; and about the year of the world 3875, or 129 before the Christian era, John Hircanus entirely subdued them, and obliged them to incorporate with the Jewish nation and to receive religion. They professed consequently the same faith, and were thus connected with the visible Church of God.

(3)

(3) "Having conquered the Edomites, or Idumeans," says Prideaux, "he reduced

them to this necessity, either to embrace the Jewish religion, or else to leave the country, and seek new dwellings elsewhere; whereon, choosing rather to leave their idolatry than their country, they all became proselytes to the Jewish religion," &c. (Connex. vol. iii, pp. 365, 366.) We come, finally, to the case of the rejected Jews in the very age of the apostles. The purpose of God, as we have seen, was to abolish the former ground on which his visible Church had for so many ages been built, that of

natural descent from Abraham by Isaac and Jacob; but this was so far from shutting out the Jews from spiritual blessings, that though, as Jews, they were now denied to be God's Church, yet they were all invited to come in with the Gentiles, or rather to lead the way into the new Church established on the new principle of faith in Jesus, as the Christ.

Hence the apostles were commanded to "begin at Jerusalem" to preach the Gospel; hence they made the Jews the first offer in

every place in Asia Minor, and other parts of the Roman empire, into which they traveled on the same blessed errand. Many of the Jews accepted the call, entered into the Church state on the new principle on which the Church of Christ was now to be elected, and hence they are called, by St. Paul, "the remnant according to the election of grace," Rom.

11:5, and "the election." The rest, it is true, are said to have been "blinded;" just in the same sense as Pharaoh was hardened. He

hardened his own heart, and was judicially left to his obduracy; they blinded themselves by their prejudices and worldliness and spiritual pride, and were at length judicially given up to blindness. But then might they not all have had a share in this new election into this new Church of God? Truly every one of them; for thus the apostle argues, Rom. 9:30-32, "What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness

which is of faith; but Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness.

Wherefore? because they sought it not by faith, but, as it were, by the works of the law." And thus we have it plainly declared that they were excluded from the new spiritual Church of God, not by any act of sovereignty, not by any decree of reprobation, but by an act of their own: they rejected the doctrine and way of faith; they attained not unto righteousness,

because they sought it not by faith.

The collective election and rejection taught in this chapter is not then unconditional, in the sense of the Calvinists; and neither the salvation of the people elected, nor the condemnation of the people rejected, flows as necessary consequents from these acts of the Divine sovereignty. They are, indeed, mysterious procedures; for doubtless it must be allowed that they place some portions of men in circumstances more

favored than others; but even in such cases God has shut out the charge of "unrighteousness" by requiring from men according "to what they have, and not according to what they have not," as we learn from many parts of Scripture which reveal the principles of the Divine administration, both as to this life and another; for no man is shut out from the mercy of God, but by his own fault. He has connected these events also with wise and gracious general plans, as to the human race. They are not

acts of arbitrary will, or of caprice; they are acts of "wisdom and knowledge," the mysterious bearings of which are to be in future times developed. "O the depth, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" These are the devout expressions with which St.

Paul concludes this discourse; but they would ill apply to the sovereign, arbitrary, and unconditional reprobation of men from God's mercies

in time and eternity, on the principle of taking some and leaving others without any reason in themselves. There is no plan in this; no wisdom; no mystery; and it is capable of no farther development for the instruction and benefit of the world; for that which rests originally on no reason but solely on arbitrary will, is incapable, from its very nature, of becoming the component part of a deeply laid, and, for a time, mysterious plan, which is to be brightened into manifest wisdom, and to terminate in the good of

mankind, and the glory of God.

The only argument of any weight which is urged to prove, that in the election spoken of in this discourse of St. Paul, individuals are intended, is, that though it should be allowed that the apostle is speaking of the election of bodies of men to be the visible Church of God; yet, as none are acknowledged by him to be his true Church, except true believers; therefore, the election of men to faith and eternal life, as individuals, must

necessarily be included; or rather, is the main thing spoken of. For as the spiritual seed of Abraham were the only persons allowed to be "the Israel of God" under the Old Testament dispensation; and as, upon the rejection of the Jews, true believers only, both of Jews and Gentiles, were allowed to constitute the Church of Christ, the spiritual seed of Abraham, under the law; and genuine Christians, both of Jews and Gentiles, under the Gospel, are "the election;" and "the

remnant according to the election of grace"

mentioned by the apostle.

In this argument truth is greatly mixed up with error, which a few observations will disentangle.

1. It is a mere assumption, that the spiritual Israelites, under the law, in opposition to the Israelites by birth, are anywhere called "the election;" and "the remnant according to the election of grace;" or even alluded to under these titles. The first phrase

occurs in Romans 11:7, "What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." Here it is evident that "the election" means the Jews of that day, who believed in Christ, in opposition to "the rest," who believed not; in other words, "the election"

was that part of the Jews, who had been chosen into the Christian Church, by faith. The second phrase occurs in verse 5, of the same chapter, "Even so,

then, at this present time, also, there is a remnant according to the election of grace;" where the same class of persons, the believing Jews, who submitted to the plan of election into the Church by "grace" through faith, are the only persons spoken of. Nor are these terms used to designate the believing Gentiles; they belong exclusively to the Christianized portion of the Jewish nation, and as the contrary assumption is without any foundation, the inferences drawn from it are imaginary.

2. It is true that, under the Old Testament dispensation, the spiritual seed of Abraham were the only part of the Israelites who were, with reference to their spiritual and eternal state, accepted of God; but it is not true, that the election of which the apostle speaks, was confined to them. With reference to Esau and Jacob, the apostle says, Romans 9:11, 13, "For the children being not yet born, neither having done good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand,

not of works, but of him that calleth; it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger; as it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." The "election" here spoken of, or God's purpose to elect, relates to Jacob being chosen in preference to Esau; which election, as we have seen, respected the descendants of Jacob. Now, if this meant the election of the pious descendants of Jacob only, and not his natural descendants; then the opposition between the election of the progeny of Jacob, and the non-

election of the progeny of Esau, is destroyed; and there was no reason to say, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated," or loved less; but the pious descendants of Jacob have I loved and elected; and the rest I have not loved, and therefore have not elected. Some of the Calvinistic commentators have felt this difficulty, and therefore say, that these cases are not given as examples of the election and reprobation of which the apostle speaks; but as illustrations of it. If considered as illustrations,

they must be felt to be of a very perplexing kind; for how the preference of one nation to another, when, as we have seen, this did not infallibly secure the salvation of the more favored nation, nor the eternal destruction of the less favored, can illustrate the election of individuals to eternal life, and the reprobation of other individuals to eternal death, is difficult to conceive. But they are manifestly examples of that one election, of which the apostle speaks throughout; and not illustrations of one

kind o f election by another. They are the instances which he gives in proof that the election of the believing Jews of his day to be, along with the believing Gentiles, the visible Church of God, and the rejection of the Jews after the flesh, was not contrary to the promises of God made to Abraham; because God had, in former times, made distinctions between the natural descendants of Abraham as to Church privileges, without any impeachment of his faithfulness to his word.

Again, if the election of which the apostle speaks were that of pious Jews in all ages, so that they alone stood in a Church relation to God, and were thus the only Jews in covenant with him; how could he speak of the rejection of the other portion of the Jews? Of their being cut off? Of the covenants "pertaining" to them? They could not be rejected, who were never received; nor cut off, who were never branches in the stock; nor have covenants pertaining to them, if in

these covenants they had never been included.

3. This notion, that the ancient election of a part of the descendants of Abraham spoken of by the apostle, was of the pious, Jews only, and, therefore, a personal election is, in part, grounded by these commentators upon a mistaken view of the meaning of the sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth verses in this chapter; in which they have been sometimes incautiously followed by those of very different sentiments, and

who have thus somewhat entangled themselves. "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel which are of Israel: neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called.

That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. For this is the word of promise, at this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son." In this

passage, the interpreters in question suppose that St.

Paul distinguishes between the spiritual Israelites, and those of natural descent; between the spiritual seed of Abraham, and his seed according to the flesh. Yet the passage not only affords no evidence that this was his intention; but implies just the contrary. Our view of its meaning is given above; but it may be necessary to support it more fully.

Let it then be recollected that the apostle is speaking of that great event, the

rejection of the Jews from being any longer the visible Church of God, on account of natural descent; and that in this passage he shows that the purpose of God to construct his Church upon a new basis, that of faith in Christ, although it would exclude the body of the Jewish people from this Church, since they refused "the election of grace" through faith, would not prove that "the word of God had fallen"

to the ground; or, as the literal meaning of the original is rendered in our

version, "has taken none effect." The word of God referred to' can only be God's original promise to Abraham, to be

"a God to him and to his seed after him;" which was often repeated to the Jews in after ages, in the covenant engagement, "I will be to you a God, and ye shall be to me a people;" a mode of expression which signifies, in all the connections in which it stands, an engagement to acknowledge them as his visible Church; he being publicly acknowledged on

their part as "their God," or object of worship and trust; and they, on the other, being acknowledged by him as his peculiar "people." This, therefore, we are to take to be the sense of the promise to Abraham and to his seed. How then does the apostle prove that the "word of God had not fallen to the ground."

although the natural seed of Abraham, the Jews of that day, had been rejected as his Church? He proves it by showing that all the children of Abraham by

natural descent had not, in the original intention of the promise, been "counted," or reckoned, as "the seed" to which these promises had been made; and this he establishes by referring to those acts of God by which he had, in his sovereign pleasure, conferred the Church relation upon the descendants of Abraham only in certain lines, as in those of Isaac and Jacob, and excluded the others. In this view, the argument is cogent to his purpose. By the exercise of the same sovereignty God had now resolved not to connect the

Church, relation with natural descent, even in the line of Isaac and Jacob; but to establish it on a ground which might comprehend the Gentile nations also, the common ground of faith in Christ. The mere children of the flesh were, therefore, in this instance excluded; and

"the children of the promise," the promise now made to believing Jews and Gentiles, those begotten by the word of the Gospel, were "counted for the seed." But though it is a great truth that only the

children of the Gospel promise are now "counted for the seed," it does not follow that the children of the promise made to Sarah were all spiritual persons; and, as such, the only subjects of that Church relation which was connected with that circum-stance. That the Gentiles who believed upon the publication of the Gospel were always contemplated as a part of that seed to which the promises were made, the apostle shows in a former part of the same epistle; but that

"mystery" was not in early times revealed. God had not then formed, nor did he till the apostle's age form, his visible Church solely on the principle of faith, and a moral relation. This is the character of the new, not of the old dispensation; and the different grounds of the Church relation were suited to the design of each. One was to preserve truth from extinction; the other to extend it into all nations: in one, therefore, a single people, taken as a nation into political as well as religious relations with God, was made the deposit

of the truth to be preserved; in the other, a national distinction, and lines of natural descent, could not be recognized, because the object was to call all nations to the obedience of the same faith, and to place all on an equality before God.

As the very ground of the Church relation, then, under the Old Testament, was natural descent from Abraham; and as it was mixed up and even identified with a political relation also, the ancient election of which the

apostle speaks could not be confined to spiritual Jews; and even if it could be proved, that the Church of God, under (he new dispensation is to be confined to true believers only, yet that would not prove that the ancient Church of God had that basis alone, since we know it had another, and a more general one. When, therefore, the apostle says, "for they are not all Israel, which are of Israel," the distinction is not between the spiritual and the natural Israelites; but between that part of the

Israelites who continued to enjoy Church privileges, and those who were "of Israel," or descendants of Jacob, surnamed Israel, as the ten tribes and parts of the two, who, being dispersed among the heathen for their sins, were no longer a part of God's visible Church. This is the first instance which the apostle gives of the rejection of a part of the natural seed of Abraham from the promise. He strengthens the argument by going up higher, even to those who had immediately been born to Abraham, the

very children of his body, Ishmael and Isaac. "The children of the flesh;" that is, Ishmael and his descendants, (so called, because he was born naturally, not supernaturally, as Isaac was, according to "the promise" made to Abraham and Sarah;)-they, says the apostle, are not the "children of God;" that is, as the context still shows, not "the seed" to whom the promise that he would be "a God to Abraham and his seed" was made: "but the children of the promise," that is, Isaac and his

descendants, were "counted for the seed." And that we might not mistake this, "the promise"

referred to is added by the apostle;- "for this is the word of the promise, at this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son." Of this promise, the Israelites by natural descent, were as much "the children" as the spiritual Israelites; and, therefore, to confine it to the latter is wholly gratuitous, and contrary to the words of the apostle. It is indeed an interesting truth, that a deep and

spiritual mystery ran through that part of the history of Abraham here referred to, which the apostle opens in his Epistle to the Galatians: "The children of the bond woman and her son," symbolized the Jews who sought justification by the law; and "the children of the promise," "the children of the free woman," those who were justified by faith, and born supernaturally, that is, "born again,"

and made heirs of the heavenly inheritance. But

these things, says St. Paul, are an

"ALLEGORY;" and therefore could not be the thing allegorized, any more than a type can be the thing typified; for a type is always of an inferior nature to the antitype, and is indeed something earthly, adumbrating that which is spiritual and heavenly. It follows, therefore, that although the choosing of Isaac and his descendants prefigured the choosing of true believers, (persons born supernaturally under the Gospel dispensation,)

to be "the children of God;" and that the rejection of the "children of the flesh," typified the rejection of the unbelieving Jews from God's Church, because they had nothing but natural descent to plead; nay, though we allow that these events might be allegorical, on one part, of the truly believing Israelites, in all ages; and on the other, of those who were Jews only "outwardly," and, therefore, as to the heavenly inheritance were not

"heirs;" yet still that which typified, and represented is allegory these spiritual mysteries, was not the spiritual mystery itself. It was a comparatively gross and earthly representation of it; and the passage is, therefore, to be understood of the election of the natural descendants of Isaac, as the children of the promise made to Sarah, to be "the seed" to which the promises of Church privileges and a Church relation were intended to be in force though still subject to the election of the line of Jacob in

preference to that of Esau; and subject again, at a still greater distance of time, to the election of the tribe of Judah, to continue God's visible Church, till the coming of Messiah, while the ten tribes, who were equally "of Israel," were rejected.

4. That this election of bodies of men to be the visible Church of God, involved the election of individuals into the true Church of God, and consequently their election to eternal life, is readily acknowledged; but this

weakens not in the least the arguments by which we have shown that the apostle, in this chapter, speaks of collective, and not of individual election; on the contrary, it establishes them. Let us, to illustrate this, first take the case of the ancient Jewish Church.

The end of God's election of bodies of men to peculiar religious advantages is, doubtless as to the individuals of which these bodies are composed, their recovery from sin, and their eternal salvation.

Hence, to all such individuals, superior means of instruction, and more efficient means of salvation are afforded along with a deeper responsibility. The election of an individual into the true Church by writing his name in heaven is, however, an effect dependent upon the election of the body to which he belongs. It follows only from his personal repentance, and justifying faith; or else we must say, that men are members of the true spiritual Church, before

they repent and have justifying faith, for which, assuredly, we have no warrant in Scripture. Individual election is then another act of God, subsequent to the former. The former is sovereign and unconditional; the latter rests upon revealed reasons; and is not, as we shall just now more fully show, unconditional. These two kinds of election, therefore, are not to be confounded; and it is absurd to argue that collective election has no existence because there is an individual election;

since the latter, on the contrary, necessarily supposes the former. The Jews, as a body, had their visible Church state, and outward privileges, although the pious Jews alone availed themselves of them to their own personal salvation. As to the Christian Church, there is a great difference in its circumstances; but the principle, though modified, is still there.

The basis of this Church was to be, not natural descent from a common head; marking out, as that

Church, some distinct family, tribe, and, as it increased in numbers, some one nation, invested too, as a nation must be, with a political character and state; but faith in Christ. Yet even this faith supposes a previous sovereign and unconditional collective election. For, as the apostle argues, "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God: but how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?" Now this sending to one Gentile nation before

another Gentile nation, a distinction which continues to be made in the administration of the Divine government to this day, is that sovereign unconditional election of the people constituting that nation, to the means of becoming God's Church by the preaching of the Gospel, through the men "sent" to them for this purpose. The persons who first believed were for the most part real Christians, in the sense of being truly, and in heart turned to God. They could not generally go so far as to be baptized into

the name of Christ, in the face of persecution, and in opposition to their own former prejudices, without a considerable previous ripeness of experience, and decision of character. Under the character of "saints," in the highest sense, the primitive Churches are addressed in the apostolical epistles: and such we are bound to conclude they were; or they would not have been so called by men who had the "discernment of spirits."

Whatever then the number was, whether small or

great, who first received the word of the Gospel in every place, they openly confessed Christ, assembled for public worship; and thus the promise was fulfilled in them: "I will be to them a God," the object of worship and trust; "and they shall be to me a people." They became God's visible Church; and for the most part entered into that, and into the true and spiritual Church at the same time. But this was not the case with all the members; and we have therefore still an election of bodies of men to

a visible Church state, independent of their election as "heirs of eternal life." The children of believers, even as children, and there-fore incapable of faith, did not remain in the same state of alienation from God as the children of unbelievers; nay, though but one parent believed, yet the children are pronounced by St. Paul, to be "holy." "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now they are holy."

When both parents believed, and trained up their families to believe in Christ, and to worship the true God, the case was stronger: the family was then "a Church in the house;" though all the members of it might not have saving faith. Sincere faith or assent to the Gospel, with desires of instruction and salvation, appear to have uniformly entitled the person to baptism; and the use of Christian ordinances followed. The numbers of the visible Church swelled till it comprehended cities,

and at last countries; whose inhabitants were thus elected to special religious privileges, and, forsaking idols and worshipping God, constituted his visible Church among Gentile nations.

And that the Apostle Paul regarded all who "called upon the name of the Lord" as Christian Churches, is evident from his asserting his authority of reproof, and counsel, and even excision over them, as to their unworthy members; and also from his

threatening the Gentile Churches with the fate of the Jewish Church;- unless they stood by faith, they also should be "cut off;"

that is, be unchurched. Of his full meaning, subsequent history gives the elucidation, in the case of those very Churches in Asia Minor which he himself planted; and which, departing from the faith of Christ, his true doctrine, have been, in many instances, "cut off," and swallowed up in the Mohammedan delusion; so that Christ is there no

longer worshipped, The whole proves a sovereign unconditional election independent of personal election; uncondit ional as to the people to whom the Gospel was first sent; unconditional as to the children born of believing parents; unconditional as to the inhabitants of those countries who, when a Christian Church was first established among them, came, without seeking it, into the possession of invaluable and efficacious means and ordinances of Christian instruction and salvation; and who all

finally, by education, became professors of the true faith; and, as far as assent goes, sincere believers. This election too, as in the Jewish Church, was made with reference to a personal election into the true spiritual Church of God; but personal election was conditional. It rested, as we have seen, upon personal repentance and justifying faith; or else we must hold that men could be members of the true Church without either. This election was then dependent upon the other; and, instead of disproving,

abundantly confirms it. The tenor of the apostle's argument sufficiently shows that the transfer of the Church state and relation from one body of men to others, is that which in this discourse he has in view-in other words, he speaks of the election of bodies of men to religious advantages, not of individuals to eternal life; and however intimately the one may be connected with the other, the latter is not necessarily involved in the former; since superior religious privileges, in all ages have, to many, proved

but an aggravation of their condemnation.

The third kind of election is personal election; or the election of individuals to be the children of God, and the heirs of eternal life.

It is not at all disputed between us and those who hold the Calvinistic view of election, whether believers in Christ are called the elect of God with reference to their individual state and individual relation to God as his "people," in the highest sense of that phrase. Such passages as

"the elect of God;" "chosen of God;" "chosen in Christ;" "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father;" and many others, we allow therefore, although borrowed from that collective election of which we have spoken, to be descriptive of an act of grace in favor of certain persons considered individually.

The first question then which naturally arises, respects the import of that act of grace which is termed choosing, or an election. It is not a

choosing to particular offices and service, which is the first kind of election we have mentioned; nor is it that collective election to religion? privileges and a visible Church state, on which we have more largely dwelt. For although "the elect" have an individual interest in such an election as parts of the collective body, thus placed in possession of the ordinances of Christianity; yet many others have the same advantages who still remain under the guilt and condemnation of sin and practical unbelief. The

individuals properly called "the elect," are they who have been made partakers of the grace and saving efficacy of the Gospel. "Many," says our Lord, "are called, but few chosen."

What true personal election is, we shall find explained in two clear passages of Scripture. It is explained negatively by our Lord, where he says to his disciples, "I have chosen you out of the world:" it is explained positively by St. Peter, when he addresses his first epistle to the "elect, according to the

foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus." To be elected, therefore, is to be separated from

"the world," and to be sanctified by the Spirit, and by the blood of Christ.

It follows, then, that election is not only an act of God done in time; but also that it is subsequent to the administration of the means of salvation, The "calling" goes before the "election;" the publication

of the doctrine of "the Spirit," and the atonement, called by Peter "the sprinkling of the blood of Christ," before that "sanctification" through which they become "the elect" of God.

The doctrine of eternal election is thus brought down to its true meaning. Actual election cannot be eternal; for, from eternity, the elect were not actually chosen out of the world, and from eternity, they could not be "sanctified unto obedience." The

phrases, "eternal election," and

"eternal decree of election," so often in the lips of Calvinists, can, in common sense, therefore, mean only an eternal purpose to elect; or a purpose formed in eternity, to elect, or choose out of the world, and sanctify in time, by "the Spirit and the blood of Jesus." This is a doctrine which no one will contend with them; but when they graft upon it another, that God hath, from eternity,

"chosen in Christ unto salvation," a set number of

men, "certam quorundam hominum multitudinem;" not upon foresight of faith and the obedience of faith, holiness, or of any other good quality, or disposition, (as a cause or condition before required in man to be chosen;) but unto faith, and the obedience of faith, holiness, &c, "non ex praevisa fide, fideique obedientia, sanctitate, aut alia aliqua bona qua litate et dis-positione,"&c, (Judgment of the Synod of Dort,) it presents itself under a different aspect,

and requires an appeal to the word of God.

This view of election has two parts: it is the choosing of a set or determinate number of men, who cannot be increased or diminished; and it is unconditional. Let us consider each.

With respect to the first, there is no text of Scripture which teaches that a fixed and determinate number of men are elected to eternal life; and the passages which the synod of Dort, adduce in proof, being such as they only infer the

doctrine from, the synod themselves allow that they have no express Scriptural evidence for this tenet. But if there is no explicit scripture in favor of the opinion, there is much against it; and to this test it must, therefore, be brought.

The election here spoken of must either be election in eternity, or election in time. If the former, it can only mean a purpose of electing in time: if the latter, it is actual election, or choosing out of the world.

Now as to God's eternal purpose to elect, it is clear, that is a subject on which we can know nothing but from his own revelation. We take, then, the matter on this ground. A purpose to elect, is a purpose to save; and when it is explicitly declared in this revelation that God "willeth all men to be saved," and that "he willeth not the death of a sinner," either we must say, that his will is contrary to his, purpose, which would be to charge God foolishly, and indeed has no meaning at all; or it agrees with his purpose: if

then his will agrees with his purpose, that purpose was not confined to a "certain determinate number of men;" but extended to all "whosoever"

should believe, that they might be elected and saved.

Again, we have established it as the doctrine of Scripture, that our Lord Jesus Christ died for all men, that all men through him might be saved; but if he died in order to their salvation through faith, he died in order to their election through faith; and

God must have purposed this from eternity.

Farther, we have his own message to all to whom his servants preach the Gospel. They are commanded to preach "to every creature," - "He that believeth shall be saved; and he that believeth not shall be damned." This is an unquestionable decree of God in time; and, if God be unchangeable, it was his decree, as touching this matter, from all eternity. But this decree or purpose can in no way be reconciled to the doctrine of an

eternal purpose to elect only "a set and determinate number." For the Gospel could not be good news to "every creature" to whom it should be as such proclaimed, which is the first contradiction to the text. Nor would those who believe it not, but who are nevertheless commanded to believe it, have any power to believe it, which is the second contradiction: for since they are to be "damned" for not believing, they must have had the power to believe, or they could not have come into condemnation for an act

impossible to them to perform, or else we must admit it as a principle of the Divine government that God commands his creatures to do, what under no circumstances they can do; and then punishes them for not doing what he thus commands. Finally, he commands those that believe not, and who are alleged not to be included in this "fixed number" of elected persons, to believe the good tidings, as a matter in which they are interested: they are commanded to believe the Gospel as a truth; but if

they are not interested in it, they are commanded to believe a falsehood, which is the third contradiction; and thus the text and the doctrine cannot consist together.

As the whole argument on this point is involved in what we have already established concerning the universal extent of the benefits of Christ's death, we may leave it to be determined by what has been advanced on that topic; observing only, that two of the points there confirmed bear directly

upon the doctrine, that election is confined to a "fixed number of men," If we have proved from Scripture, that the reason of the condemnation of men lies in themselves, and not in the want of a sufficient and effectual provision having been made in Christ for their salvation, then the number of the actually elect might be increased; and if it has been established that those for whom Christ died might "perish;" and that true believers may "turn back unto perdition," and be "cast away," and fall into

a state in which it were better for them "never to have known the way of righteousness," then the number of the elect may be diminished. To what has already been said on these subjects the reader is referred; and we shall now only mention a few of the difficulties with which the doctrine of an election from eternity of a determinate number of men to be made heirs of eternal life is attended.

Whether men will look to the dark and repugnant side of this doc. trine of the

eternal election of a certain number of men unto salvation, or not, it unavoidably follows from it, that all but the persons so chosen in Christ, are placed utterly and absolutely, from their very birth, out of the reach of salvation; and have no share at all in the saving mercies of God, who from eternity purposed to reject them, and that not for their fault as sinners. For all, except Adam and Eve, have come into the world with a nature which, left to itself, could not but sin; and as the determination of God,

never to give the reprobate the means of avoiding sin, could not rest upon their fault, for what is absolutely inevitable cannot be charged on man as his fault, so it must rest where all the high Calvinistic divines place it, - upon the mere will and sovereign pleasure of God.

The difficulties of reconciling such a scheme as this to the nature of God, not as it is fancied by man, but as it is revealed in his own word; and to many other declarations of Scripture as to the

principles of the administration both of his law and of his grace; one would suppose insuperable by any mind, and indeed, are so revolting, that few of those who cling to the doctrine of election will be found bold enough to keep them steadily in sight. They, even think it uncandid for us who oppose these views to pursue them to their legitimate logical consequences. But in discussion this is inevitable; and if it be done in fairness, and in the spirit of candor, without pushing

hard arguments into hard words, the cause of truth, and a right understanding of the word of God, will thereby be promoted.

The doctrine of the election to eternal life only of a certain determinate number of men to salvation, involving, as it necessarily does, the doctrine of the absolute and unconditional reprobation of all the rest of mankind, cannot, we may confidently affirm, be reconciled, 1. To the love of God. "God is love." "He is loving to every man: and

his tender mercies are over all his works."

2. Nor to the wisdom of God; for the bringing into being a vast number of intelligent creatures under a necessity of sinning, and of being eternally lost, teaches no moral lesson to the world; and contradicts all those notions of wisdom in the ends and processes of government which we are taught to look for, not only from natural reason, but from the Scriptures.

3. Nor to the grace of God, which is so often magnified in the Scriptures: "for doth

it argue any sovereign or high strain; any super-abounding richness of grace or mercy in any man, when ten thousand have equally offended him, only to pardon one or two of them?" (Good-win's Agreement and Difference.) And on such a scheme can there be any interpretation given of the passage "that where sin had abounded, grace might much more abound?" or in what sense has

"the grace of God appeared unto all men;" or even to

one-millionth part of them?

4. Nor can this merciless reprobation be reconciled to any of those numerous passages in which almighty God is represented as tenderly compassionate, and pitiful to the worst and most unworthy of his creatures, even them who finally perish. "I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth:" "Being grieved at the hardness of their hearts."

"How often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathered

her chickens under her wings, and ye would not," "The Lord is long suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish." "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance."

5. It is as manifestly contrary to his justice. Here, indeed, we would not assume to measure this attribute of God by unauthorized human conceptions; but when God

himself has appealed to those established notions of justice and equity which have been received among all enlightened persons, in all ages, as the measure and rule of his own, we cannot be charged with this presumption. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" "Are not my ways equal? saith the Lord." We may then be bold to affirm, that justice and equity in God are what they are taken to be among reasonable men; and if all men every where would condemn it, as most contrary to justice and

right, that a sovereign should condemn to death one or more of his subjects, for not obeying laws which it is absolutely impossible for them, under any circumstances which they can possibly avail themselves of, to obey, and much more the greater part of his subjects; and to require them, on pain of aggravated punishment, to do something in order to the pardon and remission of their offences, which he knows they cannot do, say to stop the tide or to remove a mountain; it implies a charge as awfully

and obviously unjust against God, who is so "holy and just in all his doings," so exactly "just in the judgments which he executeth," as to silence all his creatures, to suppose him to act precisely in the same manner as to those whom he has passed by and rejected, without any avoidable fault of their own; to destroy them by the simple rule of his own sovereignty, or, in other words, to show that he has power to do it. In whatever light the subject be viewed, no fault, in any right construction, can be

chargeable upon the persons so punished, or, as we may rather say, destroyed, since punishment supposes a judicial proceeding, which this act shuts out. For either the reprobates are destroyed for a pure reason of sovereignty, without any reference to their sinfulness, and thus all criminality is left out of the consideration; or they are destroyed for the sin of Adam, to which they were not consenting; or for personal faults resulting from a corruption of nature which they brought into

the world with them, and which God wills not to correct, and they have no power to correct themselves. Every received notion of justice is thus violated. We grant, indeed, that some proceedings of the Almighty may appear at first irreconcilable with justice, which are not so; as that we should suffer pain and death, and be infected with a morally corrupt nature in consequence of the transgression of our first progenitors; that children should suffer for their parents' faults in the ordinary course of

providence; and that, in general calamities, the comparatively innocent should suffer i the same evils as the guilty. But none of these are parallel cases. For the "free gift" has come upon all men, "in order to justification of life," through "the righteousness" of the second Adam, so that the terms of our probation are but changed. None are doomed to inevitable ruin, or the above words of the apostle would have no meaning; and pain and death, as to all who avail themselves of the remedy,

are made the instruments of a higher life, and of a super abounding of grace through Christ. The same observation may be made as to children who suffer evils for their parents' faults. This circumstance alters the terms of their probation; but if every condition of probation leaves to men the possibility and the hope of eternal life, and the circumstances of all are balanced and weighed by him who administers the affairs of individuals on principles, the end of which is to turn all the evils of life

into spiritual and higher blessings, there is, obviously, no impeachment of justice in the circumstances of the probation assigned to any person whatever. As to the innocent suffering equally with the guilty in general calamities, the persons so suffering are but comparatively innocent, and their personal transgressions against God deserve a higher punishment than any which this life witnesses; this may also as to th em be overruled for merciful purposes, and a future life

presents its manifold compensations. But as to the non-elect, the whole case, in this scheme of sovereign reprobation, or sovereign preterition, is supposed to be before us. Their state is fixed, their afflictions in this life will not in any instance be overruled for ends of edification and salvation; they are left under a necessity of sinning in every condition; and a future life presents no compensation, but a fearful looking for of fiery and quenchless indignation. It is surely not possible for

the ingenuity of man to reconcile this to any notion of just government which has ever obtained; and by the established notions of justice and equity in human affairs, we are taught by the Scriptures themselves to judge of the Divine proceedings in all completely stated and comprehensible cases.

6. Equally impossible is it to reconcile this notion to the sincerity of God in offering salvation by Christ to all who hear the Gospel, of whom this scheme supposes the majority, or

at least great numbers, to be among the reprobate. The Gospel, as we have seen, is commanded to be preached to "every creature;" which publication of "good news to every creature," is an offer of salvation

"to every creature," accompanied with earnest invitations to embrace it, and admonitory combinations lest any should neglect and despise it. But does it not involve a serious reflection upon the truth and sincerity of God which men ought to

shudder at, to assume, at the very time the Gospel is thus preached, that no part of this good news was ever designed to benefit the majority, or any great part of those to whom it is addressed? that they to whom this love of God in Christ is proclaimed were never loved by God? that he has decreed that many to whom he offers salvation, and whom he invites to receive it, shall never be saved? and that he will consider their sins aggravated by rejecting that which they never could receive, and which he never

designed them to receive? It is no answer to this to say, that we also admit that the offers of mercy are made by God to many whom he, by virtue of his prescience, knows will never receive them. We grant this; but, not now to enter upon the question of foreknowledge, it is enough to reply, that here there is no insincerity. On the Calvinian scheme the offer of salvation is made to those for whose sins Christ made no atonement; on ours, he made atonement for the sins of all. On the former, the offer is made to

those whom God never designed to embrace it; on ours, to none but those whom God seriously and in truth wills that they should avail themselves of it; on their theory, the bar to the salvation of the non-elect lies in the want of a provided sacrifice for sin; on ours, it rests solely in men themselves: one consists, therefore, with a perfect sincerity of offer, the other cannot be maintained without bringing the sincerity of God into question, and fixing a stigma upon his moral truth.

7. Unconditional reprobation cannot be reconciled with that frequent declaration of Scripture, that God is no respecter of persons. This phrase, we grant, is not to be interpreted" as though the bounties of the Almighty were dispensed in equal measures to his creatures. In the administration of favor, there is place for the exercise of that prerogative which, in a just sense, is called the sovereignty of God; but justice knows but of one rule; it is, in its nature, settled and fixed,

and respects not the person, but the case. "To have respect of persons" is a phrase, therefore, in Scripture, which sometimes refers to judicial proceedings, and signifies to judge from partiality and affection, and not upon the merits of the question. It is also used by St. Peter with reference to the acceptance of Cornelius:- "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation, he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." Here it is clear, that to respect persons,

would be to reject or accept them without regard to their moral qualities, and on some national or other prejudice or partiality which forms no moral rule of any kind. But if the doctrine of absolute election and reprobation be true; if we are to understand that men like Jacob and Esau, in the Calvinistic construction of the passage, while in the womb of their mother, nay, from eternity, are loved and hated, elected or reprobated, before they have done "good or evil," then it necessarily follows,

that there is precisely this kind of respect of persons with God; for his acceptance or rejection of men stands on some ground of aversion or dislike, which cannot be resolved into any moral rule, and has no respect to the merits of the case itself; and if the Scripture affirms that there is no such respect of persons with God, then the doctrine which implies it is contradicted by inspired authority.

8. The doctrine of which we are showing the difficulties,

brings with it the repulsive and shocking opinion of the eternal punishment of infants. Some Calvinists have, indeed, to get rid of the difficulty, or rather to put it out of sight, consigned them to annihilation; but of the annihilation of any human being there is no intimation in the word of God. In order, therefore, to avoid the fearful consequence of admitting the punishment of beings innocent as to all actual sin, there is no other way than to suppose all children dying in infancy to

be an elected portion of mankind, which, however, would be a mere hypothesis brought in to serve a theory without any evidence. That some of those who, as they suppose, are under this sentence of reprobation, die in their infancy, is probably, what most Calvinists allow; and if their doctrine be received cannot be denied; and it follows, therefore, that all such infants are eternally lost. Now we know that infants are not lost, because our Lord gave it as a reason why little children ought not to be hindered

from coming unto him, that "of such is the kingdom of heaven." On which Calvin himself remarks, (Harm. in Matt. 19:13,) "in this word, 'for of such is the kingdom of heaven,'

Christ comprehends as well little children themselves, as those who in disposition resemble them. Hac voce, tam parvulos, quam eorum similes, comprehendit." We are assured of the salvation of infants, also, because "the free gift has come upon all men to [in order to]

justification of life," and because children are not capable of rejecting that blessing, and must, therefore, derive benefit from it. The point, also, on which we have just now touched, that "there is no respect of persons with God," demonstrates it. For, as it will be acknowledged that some children, dying in infancy, are saved, it must follow, from this principle and axiom in the Divine government, that all infants are saved: to the case of all infants, as to innocence or guilt, sin or righteousness, being the

same, and God, as a judge, being "no respecter of persons," but regarding only the merits of the case; he cannot make this awful distinction as to them, that one part shall be eternally saved and the other eternally lost. That doctrine, therefore, which implies the perdition of infants cannot be congruous to the Scriptures of truth; but is utterly abhorrent to them. (On the case of infants, see part ii, p. 57.)

9. Finally, not to multiply these instances of the

difficulties which accompany the doctrine of absolute reprobation, or of preterition, (to use the milder term, though the argument is not in the least changed by it,) it destroys the end of punitive justice. That end can only be to deter men from offence, and to add strength to the law of God. But if the whole body of the reprobate are left to the influence of their fallen nature without remedy, they cannot be deterred from sin by threats of inevitable punishment; nor can they ever submit to the

dominion of the law of GOD: their doom is fixed, and threats and examples can avail nothing.

We may leave every candid mind to the discussion of these and many other difficulties, suggested by the doctrine of the synod of Dort, as to the election of "a set and determinate number of men" to eternal life; and proceed to consider the second branch of this opinion-that election is unconditional. "It was made," says the synod, " not upon foresight of faith, and the obedience

of faith, holiness, or any other good quality or disposition, (as a cause or condition before required in men to be chosen,) but unto faith, and the obedience of faith, holiness, &c."

Election, we have already said, must be either God's purpose in eternity to elect actually, or it must be actual election itself in time; for as election is choosing men "out of the world," into the true Church of Christ, actual election from eternity is not possible, because the

subjects of election had no existence; there was no world to choose them "out of," and no Church into which to bring them. To affirm that any part of mankind were chosen from eternity, in purpose, (for in no other way could they be chosen,) to become members of the Church without foresight of faith, and the obedience of faith," is therefore to say, that God purposed from all eternity to establish a distinction between the world, "out" of which the elect are actually chosen, and the church, which has no foundation

in, or respect to, faith and obedience; in other words, to constitute his Church of persons to whose faith and obedience he had no respect. For how is this conclusion to be avoided? The subjects of this election, it seems, are chosen as men, as Peter, James, and John, not as believers. God eternally purposed to make Peter, James, and John, members of his Church, without respect to their faith or obedience; his Church is therefore constituted on the sole principle of this purpose, not upon the basis

of faith and obedience; and the persons chosen into it in time are chosen because they are of the number included in this eternal purpose, and with no regard to their being believers and obedient, or the contrary. How manifestly this opposes the word of God, we need scarcely stay to point out It contradicts that specific distinction constantly made in Scripture between the true Church and the world, the only marks of distinction being, as to the former, faith and obedience; and as to the

latter, unbelief and disobedience-in other words, the Church is composed not merely of men, as Peter, James, and John; but of Peter, James, and John believing and obeying: while all who believe not, and obey not, are "the world." The Scriptures make the essential elements of the Church to be believing and obeying men; the synod of Dort makes them to be men in the simple condition of being included in a set and determinate number, chosen with no respect to faith and

obedience. Thus we have laid two very different foundations upon which to place the superstructure of the Church of Christ; one of them indeed is to be found in the Scriptures, but the other only in the theories of men; and as they agree not together, one of them must be renounced.

But election, without respect to faith, is contrary also to the history of the commencement and first constitution of the Church of Christ. Peter, James, and John did not become

disciples of Christ in unbelief and disobedience. The very act of their becoming disciples of Christ, unequivocally implied some degree both of faith and obedience. They were chosen, not as men, but as believing men. This is indicated also by the grand rite of baptism, instituted by Christ when he commissioned his disciples to preach the Gospel, and call men into his Church. That baptism was the gate into this Church cannot be denied; but faith was required in order to baptism; and,

where true faith existed, this open confession of Christ would necessarily follow, without delay. Here, then, we see on what grounds men were actually elected into the Church of Christ; it was with respect to their faith that they were thus chosen out of the world, and thus chosen into the Church. The rule, too, is universal; and if so, if it universally holds good that actual election has respect to faith, then, unless God's eternal purpose to elect be at variance with his electing, that is unless he purposes

one thing and does another differing from his purpose; purposes to elect without respect to faith; and only actually elects with respect to faith; his eternal purpose to elect had respect both to faith and obedience.

It is true, that the synod of Dort says, that election is "unto faith and the obedience of faith," &c, thereby making the end of election to be faith: in other words their doctrine is, that some men were personally chosen to believe and obey, even before they existed. But we

have no such doctrine in Scripture as the election of individuals unto faith; and it is inconsistent with several passages which expressly speak of personal election

"Many are called but few chosen." In this passage we must understand, that the many who are called, are called to believe and obey the Gospel, or the calling means nothing; in other words they are not, called. But if the end of this calling be faith and obedience, and the end of election also be faith and obedience, then

have we in the text a senseless tautology; for if the many are called to believe and obey, then, of course, we need not have been told that the few are chosen to believe and obey, since the few are included in the many. But if the "choosing" of the "few"

means, as it must, something different to the "calling" of the "many," then is the end of election different to the end of calling; and if the election be, as is plain from the passage, consequent upon the calling, then it can

mean nothing else than the choosing of those "few," of the "many,"

who being obedient to the "calling," had previously believed and obeyed, into the true Church and family of God, which is the proper and direct object of personal election. This passage, therefore, which unquestionably speaks of personal election, contradicts the notion of an election unto faith and obedience, and makes our election consequent upon our obedience to the

calling, or evangelical invitation.

Let this notion of personal election unto faith be tested also by another passage, in which, like the former, personal election is spoken of. "I have chosen you out of the world," John 15:19.

According to the notion of the synod of Dort, the act of election consists in appointing or ordaining a certain number of the human race to believe and obey: here the personal electing act is a choosing out of the world, a

choosing, manifestly, into the number of Christ's disciples, which no man is capable of without a previous faith; for the very act of becoming Christ's disciple was a confession of faith in him.

A third passage, in which election is spoken of as personal, or at least with more direct reference to individual experience, than to Christians in their collective capacity as the Church of Christ, is 1 Peter 1:2, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through

sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus!" Here obedience is not the end of election, but of the sanctification of the Spirit; and both are joined "with the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus," (which, in all cases, is apprehended by faith,) as the media through which our election is effected - "elect through sanctification of the Spirit," &c. These cannot, therefore, be the ends of our personal election; for if we are elected "through" that sanctification of the Spirit which produces

obedience, we are not elected, king unsanctified and disobedient, in order to be sanctified by the Spirit that we may obey: it is the work of the Spirit which produces obedient faith, and through both we are "elected" into the Church of God.

Very similar to the passage just explained is 2 Thess. 2:13,14, "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren, because God hath from me beginning chosen you unto salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit

and belief of the truth; whereunto he called you by our Gospel to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." As the apostle had been predicting the future apostasy of persons professing Christianity, he recollects, with gratitude, that from "the beginning" from the very first reception of the Gospel in Thessalonica, which was preached there by St. Paul himself with great success, the Thessalonians had manifested no symptoms of this apostasy, but had been honorably steadfast in the

faith. For this he gives thanks to God in the verses above quoted, and in the 15th exhorts them still "to stand fast." When, therefore, Calvinistic commentators interpret the clause "hath chosen you from the beginning," to mean election from eternity, they make a gratuitous assumption which has nothing in the scope of the passage to warrant it. Mr. Scott, indeed, (Notes in loc.) rather depends upon the "calling" of the Thessalonians being, as he states, subsequent to their

election, than upon an arbitrary interpretation of the clause "from the beginning" and says, "if the calling of the Thessalonians was the effect of any preceding choice of them, it comes to the same thing whether the choice was made the preceding day, or from the foundation of the world." But the calling of the members of this Church is not represented by, the apostle as the effect of their having been chosen, but on the contrary, their election is spoken of as the effect of "the sanctification of the

Spirit, and belief of the truth;" and these, as the effects of the calling of the Thessalonians by the Gospel, - "whereunto," to which sanctification and faith," he called you by our Gospel." Or the whole may be considered as the antecedent to the next clause "to which" election from the beginning, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth, "he called you by our Gospel." Certain it is, that sanctification and belief of the truth cannot be the ends of election if they are the means of it, as they are

here said to be; and we may therefore conclude from this, as well as from the other passages we have quoted as speaking of the personal election of believers, that this kind of election is not "unto faith and obedience," as stated in "The Judgment of the Synod of Dort," that is, a choice of individuals to be made believers and obedient persons; but an election, as it is expressed both by St. Peter and St. Paul, through faith and obedience; or, in other words, a choice of persons already believing and

obedient into the family of God.

There are scarcely any other passages in the New Testament, which speak expressly of personal election; but there is another class of texts in which the term election occurs, which refer to believers, not distributive, but collectively; not personally, but as a body, either existing as particular Churches, or as the universal Church; and, by entirely overlooking, or ingeniously confounding this obvious distinction,

the advocates of unconditional personal election bring forward such passages with confidence, as proofs of the doctrine of election unto faith furnished by the word of God. Thus the synod of Dort quotes, as the leading proof of its doctrine of personal election, Eph. 1:4,5,6," According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ, to himself,

according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."

This, indeed, is the only passage quoted by the synod of Dort, in which the terms chosen and election occur; and, we may ask, why none of those on which we have above offered some remarks, were quoted also, since the subject of personal election is much more obviously contained in them than in that which they have

adduced? The only answer is, that the others were perceived not to accord with the doctrine of "election unto faith and obedience;" while this, in which the personal election of individual believers is not referred to, but the collective election of the whole body of Christians, was better suited to give a color to their doctrine, because it speaks, of course, and as the subject required, of election as the means of faith, and of faith as the end of election, an order which is reversed when the election of

individuals, or the election of any body of believers, considered distributively and personally, is the subject of the apostle's discourse. If, indeed, the election spoken of in this passage were personal election, the Calvinistic doctrine would not follow from it; because it would admit of being questioned, whether the choosing in Christ before the foundation of the world, here mentioned, was a choice of certain persons, as men merely, or as believing men, which is surely the most rational.

For all choice necessarily supposes some reason; but, as men, all things were equal between those who, according to this scheme, were chosen, and those who were passed by. But, according to the Calvinists, this election was made arbitrarily, that is without any reason, but that God would have it so; and to this sense they bend the clause in the passage under consideration," according to the good pleasure of his will." This phrase has, however, no such arbitrary sense. "The good pleasure of his will" means the

benevolent and full acquiescence of the will of God with a wise and gracious act; and, accordingly, in verse 11, the phrase is varied "according to the counsel of his own will," an expression which is at utter variance with the repulsive notion that mere will is in any case the rule of the Divine conduct, or, in other words, that he does any thing merely because he will do it, which excludes all "counsel." To choose men to salvation considered as believers, gives a reason for election which not only manifests

the wisdom and goodness of God, but has the advantage of being entirely consistent with his own published and express decree:

"he that believeth shall be saved; and he that believeth not shall be damned." This revealed and promulgated decree, we must believe, was according to his eternal purpose; and if from eternity he determined that believers, and only believers in Christ, among the fallen race, should be saved, the conclusion is

inevitable that those whom he chose in Christ "before the foundation of the world," were considered, not as men merely, which gives no reason of choice worthy of any rational being, much less of the ever blessed God; but as believing men, which harmoni zes the doctrine of election with the other doctrines of Scripture, instead of placing it, as in the Calvinistic scheme, in opposition to them. For the choice not being of certain men, as such; but of all persons believing; and all men to whom the Gospel is

preached, being called to believe, every one may place himself in the number of the persons so elected. Thus we get rid of the doctrine of the election of a set and determinate number of men; and with that, of the fearful consequence, the absolute reprobation of all the rest, which so few Calvinists themselves have the courage to avow and maintain.

But though this argument might be very successfully urged against those who interpret the passage above

quoted of personal election, the context bears unequivocal proofs that it is not of an election or predestination of this kind of which the apostle speaks; but of the election of believing Jews and Gentiles into the Church of God; in other words, of the eternal purpose of God, upon the publication of the Gospel, to constitute his visible Church no longer upon the ground of natural descent from Abraham, but upon the foundation of faith in Christ. For upon no other hypothesis can that distinction which the

apostle makes between the Jews who first believed, and the Gentile Ephesians, who afterward believed, be at all explained. He speaks first of the election of Christians in general, whether Jews or Gentiles; using the pronouns "us"and

"we" as comprehending himself and all others. He then proceeds to the "predestination" of those

"who first trusted in Christ:" plainly meaning himself and other believing Jews. He goes on to say, that the Ephesians were

made partakers of the same faith, and therefore were the subjects of the same election and predestination: "in whom ye also trusted after that ye heard the word of truth:" the preaching of which truth to them as Gentiles, by the apostle and his coadjutors, was, in consequence of God "having made known unto them the mystery of his will, that in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ;" which, in the next chapter, a manifest

continuance of the same head of discourse, is explained to mean the calling in of the Gentiles with the believing Jews, reconciling "both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby." The same subject he pursues in the third chapter, representing this union of believing Jews and Gentiles in one Church as the revelation of the mystery which had been hid "from the beginning of the world;" but was now manifested

"according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord," verses 8-11. Here then we have the true meaning of the election and predestination of the Ephesians spoken of in the opening of the epistle: it was their election, as Gentiles, to be, along with the believing Jews, the Church of God, his acknowledged people on earth; which election was, according to God's

"eternal purpose," to change the constitution of his Church; to establish it

on the ground of faith in Christ; and thus to extend it into all nations. So far as this respected the Ephesians in general, their i election to hear the Gospel sooner than many other Gentiles was unconditional and sovereign, and was an election "unto faith and obedience of faith;" that is to say, these were the ends of that election; but so far as the Ephesians were concerned, as individuals, they were actually chosen into the Church of Christ as its vital members, on their believing; and so the

election to the saving benefits of the Gospel was a consequence of their faith, and not the end of it, and was therefore conditional - "in whom also ye trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation; in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise."

The Calvinistic doctrine of election unto faith has no stronger passage than this to lean upon for support; and this manifestly fails them: while other passages in which the terms election,

or chosen occur, all favor a very different view of the Scripture doctrine. When we are commanded to be diligent "to make our calling and election sure," or firm, this supposes that it may be rendered nugatory by want of diligence; a doctrine which cannot comport with the absolute certainty of our salvation as founded upon a decree determining, infallibly, our personal election to eternal life, and our faith and obedience in order to it. When believers are called a "chosen generation," they are also

called "a royal priesthood, a holy people;" and if the latter characteristics depend upon, and are consequences of faith, so the former depends upon a previous faith, and is the consequence of it. Finally, although these terms themselves occur in but few passages, and in all of them which respect the personal experience of individuals express, or necessarily imply, the previous condition of faith, there are many others, which, in different terms, embody the same doctrine. The phrases to be "in

Christ," and to be "Christ's," are, doubtless, equivalent to the personal election of believers: and these, and similar modes of expression, are constantly occurring in the New Testament; but no man is ever represented as

"Christ's," or as "in Christ," by an eternal election unto faith; but, on the contrary, as entering into that relation which is termed being "in Christ;" or being "Christ's" through personal faith alone. The Scripture knows no such distinctions as elect unbelievers, and

elect believers; but all unbelievers are represented as "of the world;" under "condemnation," so that "the wrath of God abideth upon them;" and as liable to eternal ruin. But if Calvinistic election be true, then there are elect unbelievers; and with respect to these, the doctrine of Scripture is contradicted: for they are not "of the world," though in a state of unbelief since God from eternity "chose them out of the world;" they are not under condemnation," but were

justified from eternity;" "the wrath of God does not abide upon them," for they are objects of an unchangeable love which has decreed their salvation: subject to no conditions whatever; and therefore no state of unbelief can make them objects of wrath, as no condition of faith can make them objects of a love which was moved by no such consideration. Nor are they liable to ruin. They never were, nor can be liable to it: the very threats of God are without meaning as to them, and their consciousness of guilt

and danger under the awakenings of the Spirit are deceptions, and unreal; contra-dieting the work of the Spirit in the heart of man, as the spirit of truth. For if he "convinces them of sin," he convinces them of danger; but they are, in fact, in no danger; and the monstrous conclusion follows inevitably, that the Spirit is employed in exciting fears which have no foundation.

We have thus considered the Scriptural doctrine of election; and as we find nothing in it which can

warrant any one to limit the meaning of the texts we have adduced to prove that Christ made an actual atonement for the sins of all mankind, we may proceed to examine another class of Scripture proofs quoted by Calvinists to strengthen their argument:- those which speak of the

"calling" and "predestination" of believers.

The terms "to call," "called," and "calling," very frequently occur in the New Testament, and

especially in the epistles. Sometimes "to call" signifies to invite to the blessings of the Gospel, to offer salvation through Christ, either by God himself, or under his appointment, by his servants; and in the parable of the marriage of the king's son, Matt. 22:1-14, which appears to have given rise to many instances of the use of this term in the epistles, we have three descriptions of "called" or invited persons. First, the disobedient who would not come in at the

call; but made light of it. Second, the class of persons represent, ed by the man who, when the king came in to see his guests, had not on the wedding garment; and with respect to whom our Lord makes the general, remark, "for many are called, but few are chosen." The persons thus represented by this individual culprit, were not only "called," but actually came into the company. Third, the approved guests; those who were both called and chosen. As far as the simple calling, or invitation, is

concerned, all these three classes stand upon equal ground; all were invited; and it depended upon their choice and con-duct whether they embraced the invitation, and were admitted as guests. We have nothing here to countenance the Calvinistic fiction, which is termed

"effectual calling." This implies an irresistible influence exerted upon all the approved guests, but withheld from the disobedient, who could not, therefore, be otherwise than disobedient; or at

most could only come in without that wedding garment, which it was never put into their power to take out of the king's wardrobe; the want of which would necessarily exclude them, if not from the Church on earth, yet from the Church in heaven. The doctrine of the parable is in entire contradiction to this; for they who refused, and they who complied but partially with the calling, are represented, not merely as being left without the benefit of the feast; but as incurring additional guilt and condemnation for

refusing the invitation. It is to this offer of salvation by the Gospel, this invitation to spiritual and eternal benefits, that St. Peter appears to refer, when he says, Acts 2:39, "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall CALL;" a passage which, we may observe, in passing, declares "the promise" to be as extensive as the "calling;" in other words, as the offer or invitation. To this also St. Paul refers, Rom. 1:5, 6, "By whom we have

received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name;" that is, to publish his Gospel, in order to bring all nations to the obedience of faith; "among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ;" you at Rome have heard the Gospel, and have been invited to salvation in consequence of this design. This promulgation of the Gospel, by the ministry of the apostle, personally, under the name of calling, is also referred to in Galatians 1:6, "I marvel that ye are so soon

removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ," (obviously meaning that it was the apostle himself who had called them by his preaching to the grace of Christ,) "unto another Gospel." So also in chapter 5:13, "For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty," Again, 1

Thess. 2:12, "That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you [invited you] to his kingdom and glory."

In our Lord's parable it will also be observed, that the

persons called are not invited as separate individuals to partake of solitary blessings; but they are called to "a feast," into a company, or society, before whom the banquet is spread. The full revelation of the transfer of the visible Church of Christ from Jews by birth, to believers of all nations, was not, however, then made.

When this branch of the evangelic system was fully revealed to the apostles, and taught by them to others, that part of our Lord's parable which was

not at first developed, was more particularly inculcated by his inspired followers. The calling of guests to the evangelical feast, we now more fully learn, was not the mere calling of men to partake of spiritual benefits; but calling them also to form a spiritual society composed of Jews and Gentiles, the believing men of all nations; to have a common fellowship in these blessings, and to be formed into this fellowship for the purpose of increasing their number, and diffusing the benefits of salvation among

the people or nation to which they respectively belonged. The invitation, "the calling" of the first preachers, was to all who heard them in Rome, in Ephesus, in Corinth, in all other places; and those who embraced it, and joined themselves to the Church by faith, baptism, and continued public profession, were named especially and eminently "the CALLED;" because of their obedience to the invitation. They not only put in their claim to the blessings of Christianity individually; but became

members of the new Church, that spiritual society of believers which God now visibly owned as hi: people. As they were thus called into a common fellowship by the Gospel, this is sometimes termed their "vocation:" as the object of this Church state was to promote "holiness,"

it is termed a "holy vocation:" as sanctity was required of the members, they are said to have been "called to be saints:" as the final result was, through the mercy of God, to be eternal life, we hear of "the

hope of their calling;" and of their being "called to his eternal glory by Christ Jesus."

These views will abundantly explain the various passages in which the term "calling" occurs in the epistles, Rom. 9:24, "Even us whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles;" that is, whom he hath made members of his Church through faith. 1 Cor. 1:24, 'But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the

wisdom of God;" the wisdom and efficacy of the Gospel being, of course, acknowledged in their very profession of Christ, in opposition to those to whom the preaching of "Christ crucified," was "a stumbling block," and "foolishness." 1 Cor. 7:18, "Is any man CALLED;" (brought to acknowledge Christ, and to become a member of his Church;) "being circumcised, let him not become uncircumcised; is any called in uncircumcision, let him not be circumcised." Eph. 4:1-4,

"That ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called. There is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling." 1 Thess. 2:12, "That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you to his kingdom and glory." 2 Thess. 2:13,14, "Through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth, whereunto he called you by our Gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." 2 Tim. 1:9, 10, "Who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling; not

according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began; but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ:" on which passage we may remark, that the object of the "calling," and the "purpose," mentioned in it, must of necessity be interpreted to mean the establishment of the Church on the principle of faith; and not, as formerly, on natural descent. For personal election, and a purpose of effectual

personal calling, could not have been hidden till manifested by the appearing of Christ; since every instance of true conversion to God in any age prior to the appearing of Christ, would be as much a manifestation of eternal election, and an instance of personal effectual calling, according to the Calvinistic scheme, as it was after the appearance of Christ. The apostle is speaking of a purpose of God, which was kept secret till revealed by the Christian system; and, from various other parallel

passages we learn that this secret, this

"mystery," as he often calls it, was the union of the Jews and Gentiles in "one body," or Church, by faith.

In none of these passages is the doctrine of the exclusive calling of any set number of men contained; and the synod of Dort, as though they felt this, only attempt to reason the doctrine from a text not yet quoted; but which we will now examine. It is Rom 8:30; "Whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called,

them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." This is the text on which Calvinists chiefly rest their doctrine of effectual calling; and tracing it as they say, through its steps and links, they conclude, that a set and determinate number of persons having been predestinated unto salvation, this set number only are called effectually, then justified, and finally glorified. The words of the synod of Dort are, "He hath chosen a set number of certain men, neither better, nor more worthy than

others; but lying in the common misery with others, to salvation in Christ, whom he had also appointed the Mediator and Head of the elect; and the foundation of salvation from all eternity; and so he decreed to give them to him to be saved; and effectually to call, and draw them to a communion with him, by his word and Spirit; or to give them a true faith in him: to justify, sanctify, and finally glorify them; having been kept in the communion of his Son, to the demonstration of his mercy, and the praise of

the riches of his glorious grace." (4) (4) Sententia de Divina Praedest. Art. 7. Est autem Electio immutabile Del propositum, &c.

The text under consideration is added by the synod, in proof of the doctrine of this article; but it was evidently nothing to the purpose, unless it had spoken of a set and determinate number of men as predestinated and called, independent of any consideration of their faith and obedience; which number, as being determinate, would, by

consequence, exclude the rest. As these are points on which the text is at least silent, there is nothing in it unfriendly to those arguments founded on explicit texts of holy writ, which have been already urged against this view of election; and with this notion of election is refuted, also, the cognate doctrine of effectual calling, considered as a work of God in the heart, of which the elect only can be the subjects. But the passage, having been pressed into so alien a service, deserves

consideration; and it will be found that it indeed speaks of the privileges and hopes of true believers; but not of those privileges and hopes as secured to them by any such decree of election as the synod has advocated. To prove this, we remark, 1. That the chapter in which the text is found, is the lofty and animating conclusion of St. Paul's argument on justification by faith: it is a discourse of that present state of pardon and sanctity, and of that future hope of felicity, into which justification introduces

believers, notwithstanding those sufferings and persecutions of the present life to which those to whom he wrote were exposed, and under which they had need of encouragement. It was, obviously, not in his design here to speak of the doctrines of election and non-election, however these doctrines may be understood. There is nothing in the course of his argument which leads to them; and those who make use of the text in question for this purpose are obliged, therefore, to press

it, by circuitous inference, into their service.

2. As the passage stands in intimate connection with an important and elucidatory context, it ought not to be considered as insulated and complete in itself; which has been the great source of erroneous interpretations. Under the sufferings of the present time, the apostle encourages those who had believed with the hope of a glorious resurrection: this forms the subject of his consolatory remarks from verse 17 to 25. The

assistance and "intercession" of the Spirit; and the working of "all things together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose;" clearly meaning those who, according to the Divine design, had received and embraced the Gospel in truth, form two additional topics of consolatory suggestion,

- The passage under consideration immediately follows, and is in full, for the synod has quoted it short: "And we know that

all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called (who are called) according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." The connection is here manifest. "The sufferings of the present time could only work

together for the good" of them that

"love God," by being connected with, and compensated in a future state by a glorious resurrection from the dead; and therefore the apostle shows that this was the design of God, the ultimate and triumphant result of the administration of his grace, that they who love God here, should be conformed to the image of his Son, in his glorified state, that he might be "the first born among brethren:" the head and

chief of the redeemed, who shall be acknowledged as his

"brethren," and co-heirs of his glory. Thus the whole of the 29th verse is a reason given to show why "all things, however painful in the present life, work together for good to them that love GOD;" and it is therefore introduced by the connective particle, on, which has here, obviously, a casual signification, "for (because) whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate."

3. The apostle is here speaking, we grant, not of the foreknowledge or predestination of bodies of men to Church privileges; but of the experience of believers, taken distributively and personally.

This will, however, be found to strengthen our argument against the use made of the latter part of the passage by the synod of Dort.

It is affirmed of believers, that they were "foreknown." This term may be taken in the sense

of foreapproved. For not only is it common with the sacred writers to express approval by the phrase "to know;" of which Hebraism the instances are many in the New Testament; but in Rom.

11:2, "to foreknow," is best interpreted into this meaning. - "God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew." It is not of the whole people of Israel of which the apostle here speaks, as the context shows; but of the believing part of them, called subsequently "the remnant

according to the election of grace:" a clause which has been before explained. The question put by the apostle into the mouth of an objecting Jew, is, "Hath God cast away his people?" This is denied; but the illustration taken from the reservation of seven thousand men, in the time of Elijah, who had not bowed the knee to Baal, proves that St. Paul meant to say, that God had cast off from being members of his Church, all but the remnant; all but his people whom he foreknew;" those who had laid aside the

inveterate prejudices of their nation, and had entered into the new Christian Church by faith. These he foreknew, that is approved; and so received them into his Church. In this sense of the term foreknew, the text in question harmonizes well with the context. "All things work together for good to them that love God," &c. "For, whom he did foreknow," (approve as lovers of him,) "he predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son," in mind and

temper here, and especially in glory hereafter.

The second sense of foreknowing is that of simple prescience; and if any prefer this we shall not dispute with him, since it will come to the same issue. The foreknowledge of men must have respect either simply to their existence as persons, or as existing under some particular circumstances and characters. If persons only be the objects of this foreknowledge, then has God's prescience no more to do with the salvation of

the elect than of the non-elect, since all are equally foreknown as persons in a state of existence: and we might as well argue the glorification of the reprobate from God's foreknowing them, in this sense, as that of the elect. The objects of this foreknowledge, then, must be men under certain circumstances and characters; not in their simple existence as rational beings. If, therefore, the term "foreknow," in the passage above cited, "God hath not cast away his people whom he

foreknew," be taken in the sense of prescience, those of the general mass of Jews, who were not "cast away," were foreknown under some circumstance and character which distinguished them from the others; and what this was is made sufficiently plain from the context, - the persons foreknown were the then believing part of the Jews, "even so then, at this present time also, there is a remnant according to the election of grace." Equally clear are the circumstances and character under which,

more generally, the apostle represents believers as having been foreknown in the text more immediately under examination. Those "whom he did foreknow," are manifestly the believers of whom he speaks in the discourse; and who are called in chap. 8:28, "them that love God." Under some character he must have foreknown them, or his foreknowledge of them would not be special and distinctive; it would afford no ground from which to argue any thing respecting them; it could make no difference between them

and others. This specific character is given by the apostle; but it is not that which is gratuitously assumed by the synod of Dort, a selection of them from the mass, with, out respect to their faith. It is their faith itself: for of believers only is St. Paul speaking as the subjects of this foreknowledge; and such believers too as "love God," and who, having actually embraced the heavenly invitation, are emphatically said to be, as before explained, "called according to his purpose."

To predestinate, or to determine beforehand, is the next term in the text; but here it is also to be remarked, that the persons predestinated, or before determined to be glorified with Christ, are the same persons, under the same circumstances and character, as those who are said to have been foreknown of GOD; and what has been said under the former term, applies, therefore, in part, to this. The subjects of predestination are the persons foreknown, and the persons foreknown are

true believers: foreknown as such, or they could not have been specially or distinctively

"foreknown, according to the doctrine of the apostle. This predestination, then, is not of persons

"unto faith and obedience," but of believing and obedient persons unto eternal glory. Nor are faith and obedience mentioned any where as the end of predestination, except in Ephesians chap.

1, where we have already proved, when treating of

election, that the predestination spoken of in that chapter, is the eternal purpose of God to choose the Gentile Ephesians into his Church, along with the believing Jews: and that what is there said is not intended of personal, but of collective election and predestination; and that to the means and ordinances of salvation. For the argument, by which this is established, let the reader to prevent repetition, turn back.

The passage before us, then, declares, that true

believers were fore-known and predestinated to eternal glory; and when the apostle adds, "moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified;" he shows in particular how the Divine purpose to glorify believers is carried into effect, through all its stages. The great instrument of bringing men to "love God" is the Gospel; they are therefore called, invited by it, to this state and benefit: the calling being obeyed,

they are JUSTIFIED; and being justified, and continuing in that state of grace, they are glorified. This is the plain and obvious course of the amplification pursued by the apostle; but let us remark how many un-scriptural notions the synod of Dort engrafts upon it. First, a "certain number" of persons, not as believers, but as men, are foreknown; then a decree of predestination to eternal life goes forth in their favor; but still without respect to them as believing men as the

subjects of that decree;- then we suppose, by another decree, (for the first cannot look at qualities at all,) and by a second predestination, they are to be made believers;- then they are exclusively "called:" then infallibly justified; and being justified, are infallibly glorified. In opposition to these notions, we have already shown, that the persons spoken of are foreknown and predestinated as believers, not as men or persons; and we may also oppose

Scriptural objections to every other part of the interpretation.

As to calling, we allow that all of whom the apostle speaks are necessarily "called;" for since he is discoursing of the predestination of believers in Christ to eternal glory, and does not touch the question of the salvation, or otherwise, of those who have not the means of becoming such, the calling of the Gospel is necessarily supposed, as it is only upon that Divine system being proposed to their faith, that

they could become believers in Christ. But though all such as the apostle speaks of are "called;" they are not the only persons called; on the contrary, our Lord declares, that "many are called, but few chosen." To confine the calling here spoken of to those who are actually saved, it was necessary to invent the fiction of "effectual calling," which is made peculiar to the elect; but calling is the invitation, and offer, and publication of the Gospel: a bringing men into a state of

Christian privilege to be improved unto salvation, and not an operation in them. Effectual invitation, effectual offer, and effectual publication, are turns of the phrase which sufficiently expose the delusiveness of their comment. By effectual calling, they mean an inward compelling of the mind to embrace the outward invitation of the Gospel, and to yield to the inward solicitations of the Spirit which accompanies it; but this, whether true or false, is a totally different thing from all that the New

Testament terms "calling" It is true, that some embrace the call, and others reject it, yet is there in the "calling" of the Scripture nothing exclusively appropriate to those who are finally saved; and though the apostle supposes those whom he speaks of in the text as "called," to have been obedient, he confines not the calling itself to, them so as to exclude others, - still "many are called." Nor is the synod more sound in assuming that all who are called are "justified." If "many are called, and few

chosen," this assumption is unfounded: nay, all compliances with the call do not issue in justification; for the man who not only heard the call, but came in to the feast, put not on the wedding garment, and was therefore finally cast out. Equally contradictory to the Scripture is it so to explain St. Paul here, as to make him say, that all who are justified, are also glorified. The justified are glorified: but not, as we have seen from various texts of Scripture already, all who are justified. For if we have

established it, that the persons who "turn back to perdition;" "make ship-wreck of faith, and of a good conscience;" who turn out of the "way of righteousness;" who forget that they were

"purged from their old sins;" who have "tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come; and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost," and were "sanctified" with the blood they afterward "counted an unholy thing;" are represented by the apostles

to have been in a state of grace and acceptance with God, through Christ; then all persons justified are not infallibly glorified; but only such are saved as "endure to the end;" and they only receive that

"crown of life" who are "faithful unto death."

The clear reason why the apostle, having stated that true believers were foreknown and predestinated, introduces also the order and method of their salvation, was, to connect that salvation with the Gospel, and the work of

Christ; and to secure to him the glory of it. The Gospel\ reveals it, that those who "love God" shall find that "all things work together for their good," because (on) they are "predestinated to be conformed to the image of the Son of God," in his glory; yet the Gospel did not find them lovers of God, but made them so. Since, therefore, none but such persons were so foreknown and predestinated to be heirs of glory, the Gospel calling was issued according to "his purpose," or plan of

bringing them that love him to glory, in order to produce this love in them. "Whom" he thus called, assuming them to be obedient to the call, he justified; "and whom he justified," assuming them to be faithful unto death, he

"glorified." But since the persons predestinated were contemplated as believers, not as a certain number of persons; then all to whom the invitation was issued might obey that call, and all might be justified, and all glorified. In other

words, all who heard the Gospel might, through it, be brought to love God; and might take their places among those who were "predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son." For since the predestination, as we have seen, was not of a certain number of persons, but of all believers who love God; then, either it must be allowed that all who were called by the Gospel, might take the character and circumstances which would bring them under the predestination mentioned by the apostle; or else those

who deny this are bound to the conclusion, that God calls (invites) many whom he never intends to admit to the celestial feast; and not only so, but punishes them, with the severity of a relentless displeasure, for not obeying an invitation which he never designed them to accept, and which they never had the power to accept. In other words, the interpretation of this passage by the synod of Dort obliges all who follow it to admit all the consequences connected with the doctrine of

reprobation, as before stated.

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47 AN EXAMINATION OF CERTAIN PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE, SUPPOSED TO LIMIT THE EXTENT OF CHRIST'S REDEMPTION

Having now shown that those passages of Holy Writ, in which the terms election, calling, predestination, and foreknowledge occur, do

not warrant those inferences, by which Calvinists attempt to restrain the signification of those declarations with respect to the extent of the benefit of Christ's death which are expressed in terms so universal in the New Testament, we may conclude our investigation of the sense of Scripture on this point by adverting to some of those insulated texts which are most frequently adduced to support the same conclusion.

John 6:37, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

It is inferred from this, and some similar passages in the Gospels, that by a transaction between the Father and the Son, a certain number of persons, called "the elect," were given to Christ, and in process of time "drawn" to him by the Father; and that as none can be saved but those thus

"given" to him, and "drawn" by the Father, the

doctrine of "distinguishing grace" is established; and the rest of mankind, not having been given by the Father to the Son, can have no saving participation in the benefits of a redemption, which did not extend to them. This fiction has often been defended with much ingenuity; but it remains a fiction still unsupported by any good interpretation of the texts which have been assumed as its foundation.

1. The first objection to the view usually taken by Calvinists of this text, is,

that in the case of the perverse Jews, with whom the discourse of Christ was held, it places the reason of their not

"coming" to Christ, in their not having been "given" to him by the Father; whereas our Lord, on the contrary, places it in themselves, and shows that he considered their case to be in their own hands by his inviting them to come to him, and reproving them because they would not come.

"Ye have not his word (the word of the Father) abiding in you; for whom he hath

sent, him ye believe not," John 5:38. "And ye will not come to me that ye may have life," verse 40. "How can ye believe, which receive honor one of another," verse 44. "For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me," verse 46. Now these statements cannot stand together; for if the true reason why the per-verse Jews did not believe in our Lord was, that they had not been given to him of the Father, then it lay not in themselves; but if the reason was that "his word

did not abide in them;" that they "would not come to him;" that they sought worldly "honor;" finally, that they believed not Moses' writings; then it is altogether contradictory to these declarations, to place it in an act of God; to which it is not attributed in any part of the discourse.

2. To be "given" by the Father to Christ, is a phrase abundantly explained in the context which this class of interpreters generally overlook.

It had a special application to those pious Jews, who

"waited for redemption at Jerusalem:" those who read and believed the writings of Moses, (a general term it would seem for the Old Testament Scriptures,) and who were thus prepared, by more spiritual views than the rest, though they were not unmixed with obscurity, to receive Christ as the Messiah. Of this description were Peter, Andrew, Philip, Nathaniel, Lazarus and his sisters, and many others. Philip says to Nathaniel, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did

write;" and Nathaniel was manifestly a pious Jew; for our Lord said of him," Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile" The light which such honest inquirers into the meaning of the Scriptures obtained as to the import of their testimony concerning the Messiah, and the character and claims of Jesus, is expressly attributed to the teaching and revelation of "the Father," So, after Peter's confession, our Lord exclaimed, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar Jonah, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee;

but my Father which is in heaven." This teaching, and its influence upon the mind is, in John 6:44, called the "drawing" of the Father, "No man can come to me, except the Father draw him;" for, that "to draw," and "to teach" mean the same thing, is evident, since our Lord immediately adds, "It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all taught of God;" and then subjoins this exegetical observation:- "Every man, therefore, that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh to me." Those who

truly "believed" Moses' words, then, were under the Father's illuminating influence, "heard and learned of the Father;" were "drawn"

of the Father; and so, by the Father, were "given to Christ," as his disciples, to be more fully taught the mysteries of his religion, and to be made the saving partakers of its benefits:- for "this is the Father's will which sent me, that of all which he hath given me (thus to perfect in knowledge, and to exalt in holiness,) I should lose

nothing; but should raise it up again at the last day." Thus we have exhibited that beautiful process in the work of God in the hearts of sincere Jews, which took place in their transit from one dispensation to another, from Moses to Christ.

Taught of the Father; led into the sincere belief, and general spiritual understanding of the Scriptures as to the Messiah; when Christ appeared, they were "drawn" and "given" to him, as the now visible and accredited Head, Teacher,

Lord, and Savior of the Church. All in this view is natural, explicit, and supported by the context; all in the Calvinistic interpretation appears forced, obscure, and inapplicable to the whole tenor of the discourse. For to what end of edification of any kind, were the Jews told that none but a certain number, elected from eternity, and given to him before the world was by the Father, should come to him; and that they to whom he was then speaking were not of that number? But the coherence

of the discourse is manifest, when, in these sermons of our Lord, they were told that their not coming to Christ was the proof of their unbelief in Moses' writings; that they were not "taught of GOD;" that they had neither

"heard nor learned of the Father," whom they yet professed to worship, and seek; and that, as the hindrance to their coming to Christ was in the state of their hearts, it was remediable by a diligent and honest search of the Scriptures; and by listening

to the teachings of God. To this very class of Jews our Lord, in this same discourse, says, "Search the Scriptures;" but to what end were they to do this, if, in the Calvinistic sense, they were not given to him of the Father?

The text in question, then, thus opened by a reference to the whole discourse, is of obvious meaning. "All that the Father giveth me after this preparing teaching, shall or will come to me; (for it is simply the future tense of the indicative mood which is used; and

no notion of irresistible influence is conveyed;) and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." The latter clause is added to show the perfect harmony of design between Christ and the Father, a point often adverted to in this discourse; for "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." Whom, therefore, the Father so gives, I receive: I enter upon my assigned office, and shall be faithful to it. In reference also to the work of God in the hearts of men in general, as

well as to the honest and inquiring Jews of our Lord's day, these passages have a clear and interesting application, The work of the Father is carried on by his convincing and teaching Spirit; but that Spirit "testifies" of Christ, "leads" to Christ, and "gives" to Christ, that we may receive the full benefit of his sacrifice and salvation, and be placed in the Church of which he is the Head. But in this there is no exclusion. That which hinders others from coming to Christ, is that which hinders them from

being "drawn" of the Father; from "hearing and learning"

of the Father, in his holy word, and by his Spirit; which hindrance is the moral state of the heart, not any exclusive decree; not the want of teaching, or drawing; but, as it is compendiously expressed in Scripture, a "resisting of the Holy Ghost."

Matt. 20:15,16, "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own? Is thine eye evil because I am good? So the last shall be first,

and the first last; for many are called but few chosen."

This passage has been often urged in proof of the doctrine of unconditional election; and the argument raised upon it is, that God has a right to dispense grace and glory to whom he will, on a principle of pure sovereignty; and to leave others to perish in their sins. That the passage has no relation to this doctrine, needs no other proof than that it is the conclusion of the parable of the laborers in the vineyard. The householder gives to them

that "wrought but one hour" an equal reward to that bestowed upon, those who had labored through the twelve. The latter received the full price of the day's labor agreed upon; and the former were made subjects of a special and sovereign dispensation of grace. The exercise of the Divine sovereignty, in bestowing degrees of grace, or reward, is the subject of the parable, and no one disputes it; but, according to the Calvinistic interpretation, no grace at all, no reward, is bestowed upon the non-elect, who

are, moreover, punished for rejecting a grace never offered. The absurdity of such a use of the parable is obvious. It relates to no such subject; for its moral manifestly relates to the reception of great offenders, and especially of the Gentiles, into the favor of Christ, and the abundant rewards of heaven.

2 Timothy 2:19, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his; and, Let every one that nameth the name of

Christ depart from iniquity."

The apostle, in this chapter, is speaking of those ancient heretics who affirmed "that the resurrection is passed already, and overthrew the faith of some." What then? The truth itself is not overthrown; the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, or inscription, "The Lord knoweth," or approveth, or, if it please better, distinguishes and acknowledges, "them that are his;" and, "Let every

one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity;" which is as much as to say that none are truly "the Lord's" who do not depart from iniquity; and that those whose faith is "overthrown" by the influence of corrupt principles and manners, are no longer accounted

"his:" all which is perfectly congruous with the opinions of those who hold the unrestricted extent of the death of Christ. Toward the Calvinistic doctrine, this text certainly bears no friendly aspect; for surely it

was of little consequence to any, to have their "faith overthrown," if that faith never was, nor could be, connected with salvation.

John 10:26, "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you."

The argument here is, that the cause of the unbelief of the persons addressed was, that they were not of the number given to Christ by the Father, from eternity, to the exclusion of all others. (5) Let it, how-ever, be observed, that in direct opposition to this, men are

called the sheep of Christ by our Lord himself, not with reference to any supposed transaction between the Father and the Son in eternity, which is never even hinted at, but because of their qualities and acts. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them; and they follow me." "A stranger will they not follow" Why then did not the Jews believe? Because they had not the qualities of Christ's sheep; they were neither discriminating as to the voice of the shepherd, nor obedient to it. The usual Calvinistic

interpretation brings in our Lord, in this instance, as teaching the Jews that the reason why they did not believe on him, was, that they could not believe! for, as Mr. Scott says in the note below,

"not being of that chosen remnant, they were left to the pride and enmity of their carnal hearts."

This was not likely to be very edifying to them. But the words of our Lord are manifestly words of reproof, grounded not upon acts of God, but upon acts of their own; and they

are parallel to the passages- "If God were your Father, ye would love me," chap 8:42. "Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice," 18:37. "How can ye believe, which receive honor one of another," v, 44.

(5) "The true reason why they did not believe was, the want of that simple, teachable, and inoffensive temper, which characterized his sheep, for not being of that chosen remnant, they were left to the pride and enmity of their carnal hearts." (scott's

Com.) John 13:18, "I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me."

"He perfectly knew," says Mr. Scott on the passage," what persons he had chosen, as well as which of them were chosen unto salvation." This is surely making our Lord utter a very unmeaning truism; for as he chose the apostles, so he must have "known" that he chose them. Dr.

Whitby's interpretation is, therefore, to be taken in preference. "I know the temper and disposition of those whom I have chosen, and what I may expect from every one of them; for which cause I said,' Ye are not all clean;' but God in his wisdom hath permitted this, that as Ahithophel betrayed David, though he was his familiar friend, so Judas, my familiar at my table, might betray the Son of God; and so the words recorded, Psalm 91:9, might be fulfilled in him also of whom King David was the type." (Notes in

loc.) Certainly Judas was "chosen," as well as the rest. "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" nor have we any reason to conclude that Christ uses the term chosen differently in the two passages. When, therefore, our Lord says, "I know whom I have chosen," the term know must be taken in the sense of discriminating character.

John 15:16, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you that ye should go and bring forth fruit." Mr.

Scott, whom, as being a modern Calvinistic commentator, we rather choose again to quote, interprets - "chosen them unto salvation." In its proper sense, we make no objection to this phrase: it is a Scriptural one; but it must be taken in its own connection.

Here, however, either the term "chosen" is to be understood with reference to the apostolic office, which is very agreeable to the context; or if it relate to the salvation of the disciples, it can have no

respect to the doctrine of eternal election. For if the election spoken of were not an act done in time, it would have been unnecessary for our Lord, to say, "Ye have not chosen me;"

because it is obvious they could not choose him before they came into being. Another passage also, in the same discourse, farther proves, that the election mentioned was an act done in time.

"I have chosen you out of the world" verse 19, But if they were "chosen out of

the world," they were chosen subsequently to their being "in the world;" and, therefore, the election spoken of is not eternal. The last observation will also deprive these interpreters of another favorite passage",

"Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition." The

"giving" here mentioned, was no more an act of God in eternity as they pretend, than the

"choosing" to which we have already referred for in the same discourse the apostles are called

"the men thou gavest me out of the world" and were therefore given to Christ in time. The exception as to Judas, also, proves that this "giving" expresses actual discipleship. Judas had been "given" as well as the rest, or he could not have been mentioned as an exception; that is, he had been once "found" or he could not have been "lost." 2 Tim. 1:9, "Who hath saved us, and called us with

a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

Mr. Scott here contends for the doctrine of the personal election of the persons spoken of, "from the beginning, or before eternal ages," which is the most literal translation; and argues that this cannot be denied, without supposing "that all who live and die impenitent, may be said to be saved, and called

with a holy calling; because a Savior was promised from the beginning of the world." "Indeed," he adds, "the purpose of God is mentioned as the reason why they, rather than others, were saved and called." We shall see the passage in a very different light, if we attend to the following considerations.

"The purpose and grace," or gracious purpose," which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began," is represented as having been

"hid in past ages;" for the apostle immediately adds,

"but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ." It cannot be the personal election of believers, therefore, of which the apostle here speaks; because it was saying nothing to declare that the Divine purpose to elect them was not manifest in former ages; but was reserved to the appearing of Christ. Whatever degree of manifestation God's purpose of personal election as to individuals

receives, even the Calvinists acknowledge that it is made obvious only by the personal moral changes which take place in them through their "effectual calling," faith, and regeneration. Till the individual, therefore, comes into being, God's purpose to elect him cannot be manifested; and those who were so elected, but did not live till Christ appeared, could not have their election manifested before he appeared. Again, if personal election be intended in the text, and calling and conversion are

the proofs of personal election, then it is not true that the election of individuals to eternal life, was kept hid until the appearing of Christ; for every true conversion, in any former age, was as much a manifestation of personal election, that is of the peculiar favor and "distinguishing grace" of God, as it is under the Gospel. A parallel passage in the Epistle to the Ephesians, chap. 3:4-6, will, however, explain that before us. "Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the

mystery of Christ, which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto the holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the Gospel:" and in verse 11 this is called, in exact conformity to the phrase used in the Epistle to Timothy, "the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."

The "purpose," or "gracious purpose," mentioned in

both places, as formerly hidden, but "note manifested," was therefore the purpose to form one universal Church of believing Jews and Gentiles; and in the text before us, the apostle, speaking in the name of all his fellow Christians, whether Jews or Gentiles, says that they were saved and called according to that previous purpose and plan - "who hath saved us and called us" &c. The reason why the Apostle Paul so often refers to "this eternal purpose" of God, is to justify and confirm his own

ministry as a teacher of the Gentiles, and an assertor of their equal, spiritual rights with the Jews; and that this subject was present to his mind when he wrote this passage, and not an eternal, personal election, is manifest from verse 11, which is a part of the same paragraph, "whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles."

But, says Mr. Scott, "all who live and die impenitent, may then be said to be 'saved, and called with a holy calling,'

because a Savior was promised from the beginning of the world." But we do not say that any are saved only because a Savior was promised from the beginning of the world; but that the apostle simply affirms that the salvation of believers, whether Gentiles or Jews, and the means of that salvation, were the consequences of God's previous purpose, before the world began. All who are actually saved, may say, "We are saved," according to this purpose; but if their actual salvation shut out the salvation of all others,

then no more have been saved than those included by the apostle in the pronoun "us," which would prove too much. But Mr. Scott tells us that "' the purpose of God' is mentioned as the reason why they, rather than others, were thus saved and called." It is mentioned with no such view. The purpose of God is introduced by the apostle as his authority for making to "the Gentiles" the offer of salvation; and as a motive to induce Timothy to prosecute the same glorious work, after his

decease. This is obviously the scope of the whole chapter.

Acts 13:48, "And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." Mr. Scott is somewhat less confident than some others as to the support which the Calvinistic system is thought to derive from the word rendered ordained. He, however, attempts to leave the impression upon the minds of his readers, that it means, "appointed to eternal life,"

We may, however, observe, -

1. That the persons here spoken of were the Gentiles to whom the apostles preached the Gospel, upon the Jews of the same place "putting it from them," and "judging" or proving "themselves unworthy of eternal life." But if the only reason why the Gentiles believed was, that they were

"ordained," in the sense of personal predestination, "to eternal life:" then the reason why the Jews believed not was the want of such a predestinating act of God and not as it is

affirmed, an act of their own -the putting it away from them.

2. This interpretation supposes that all the elect Gentiles at Antioch believed at that time: and that no more, at least of full age, remained to believe. This is rather difficult to admit; and therefore Mr. Scott says, "though it is probable that all who were thus affected at first, did not at that time believe unto salvation; yet many did." But this is not according to the text, which says expressly, "as many as

were ordained to eternal life believed:" so that such commentators must take this inconvenient circumstance along with their interpretation, that all the elect at Antioch were, at that moment, brought into Christ's Church.

3. Even some Calvinists, not thinking that it is the practice of the apostles and evangelists to lift up the veil of the decrees so high as this interpretation supposes, choose to render the words -

"as many as were determined," or "ordered" for eternal life.

4. But we may finally observe, that, in no place in the New Testament, in which the same word occurs, is it ever employed to convey the meaning of destiny, or predestination: a consideration which is fatal to the argument which has been drawn from it. The following are the only instances of its occurrence: Matt. 28:16, "Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had

appointed them." Here the word means commanded, or at most agreed upon beforehand, and certainly conveys no idea of destiny. Luke 7:8, "For I also am a man set under authority." Here the word means, "placed, or disposed." Acts 15:2, "They determined that Paul and Barnabas should go up to Jerusalem." Here it signifies mutual agreement and decision. Acts 22:10, "Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do." Here it

means committed to, or appointed in the way of injunction; but no idea of destiny is conveyed. Acts 28:23, "And when they had appointed him a day," when they had fixed upon a day by mutual agreement; for St. Paul was not under the command or control of the visitors who came to him to hear his doctrine. Rom. 13:1,

"The powers that be are ordained of God:" clearly signifying constituted and ordered. 1 Cor.

16:15," They have addicted themselves to the ministry

of the saints:" here it can mean nothing else than applied, devoted themselves to. Thus the word never takes the sense of predestination; but, on the contrary, when St. Luke wishes to convey that notion, he combines it with a preposition, and uses a compound verb - "and hath determined the times before appointed." This was pre-ordination, and he therefore so terms it; but in the text in question he speaks not of pre-ordination, but of ordination simply. The word employed signifies,

"to place, order, appoint, dispose, determine" and is very variously applied. The prevalent idea is that of settling, ordering, and resolving; and the meaning of the text is that as many as were fixed and resol ved upon eternal life, as many as were careful about, and determined on salvation, believed. For that the historian is speaking of the candid and serious part of the hearers of the apostles, in opposition to the blaspheming Jews; that is, of those Gentiles "who, when they heard this were glad, and glorified the word

of the Lord," is evident from the context. The persons who then believed, appear to have been under a previous preparation for receiving the Gospel; and were probably religious proselytes associating with the Jews.

Luke 10:20, "But rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." The inference from this text is, that there is a register of all the elect in the "Book of Life," and that their number, according to the doctrine of the synod of Dort, is fixed

and determinate. Our Calvinistic friends forget, however, that names may be "blotted out of the Book of Life:" and so the theory falls. -

"And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the Book of Life."

Prov. 16:4, "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil."

If there be any relevance in this passage to the Calvinistic theory, it must

be taken in the supralapsarian sense, that the final cause of the creation of the wicked is their eternal punishment. It follows from this, that sin is not the cause of punishment; but that this flows from the mere will of God; which is a sufficient refutation. The persons spoken of are "wicked."

Either they were made wicked by themselves, or by God. If not by God, then to make the wicked for the day of evil, can only mean that he renders them who have made themselves

wicked, and remain incorrigibly so, the instruments of glorifying his justice, "in the day of evil," that is, in the day of punishment. The Hebrew phrase, rendered literally, is, "the Lord doth work all things for himself;" which applies as well to acts of government as to acts of creation. Thus, then, we are taught by the passage, not that God created the wicked to punish them, but so governs, controls, and subjects all things to himself; and so orders them for the accomplishment of his

purpose, that the wicked shall not escape his just displeasure; since upon such men the day of evil will ultimately come. It is therefore added in the next verse, "Though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished." (6)

(6) Holden translates the verse, "Jehovah hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked he daily sustains;" and observes, "should the received translation be deemed correct, 'the day of evil' would be considered by a Jew of the age of Solomon,

to mean, the day of trouble and affliction."

John 12:37-40, "But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him; that the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their

eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them."

Mr. Scott's interpretation is, in its first aspect, more moderate than that of many divines of the same school. It is - "they had long shut their own eyes, and hardened their own hearts; and so God would give up many of them to such judicial blindness, as rendered their conversion and salvation impossible. The prophecy was not the motive or cause of their wickedness; but it was the

declaration of God's purpose, which could not be defeated: therefore while this prophecy stood in Scripture against them, and others of like character, who hated the truth from the love of sin, the event became certain; in which sense it is said, that they could not believe."

That, in some special and aggravated cases, and especially in that which consisted in ascribing the miracles of Christ to Satan, and thus blaspheming the Holy Ghost; (cases,

however, which probably affected but a few individuals, and those principally the chief Pharisees and rabbis of our Lord's time;) there was such a judicial dereliction as Mr. Scott speaks of, is allowed; but that it extended to the body of the Jews, who at that time did not believe in the mission and miracles of Christ, may be denied. The contrary must appear from the earnest manner in which their salvation was sought by Christ and his apostles, subsequently to this declaration; and also from

the fact of great numbers of this same people being afterward brought to acknowledge and embrace Christ and his religion. This is our objection to the former part of this interpretation.

Not every one who is lost finally, is given up previously to judicial blindness. To be thus abandoned before death is a special procedure, which our Lord himself confines to the special case of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. To the latter part of the comment, the

objection is still stronger. Mr. Scott acknowledges the wicked and willful blindness of these Jews to be the cause of the judicial dereliction supposed. From this it would naturally follow, that this willful blinding and hardening of their hearts, was the true reason why they "could not believe," as provoking God to take away his Holy Spirit from them. But Mr. Scott cannot stop here. Ho will have another cause for their incapacity to believe: not, indeed, the prophecy quoted from Isaiah by the evangelist; but "God's

purpose," of which that prediction, he says, was the " declaration." It follows, then, that "they could not believe," because it was" God's purpose which could not be defeated" Agreeably to this Mr. Scott understands the prediction as asserting, that the agent in blinding the eyes of the people reproved, that is, the obstinate Jews, was God himself.

Let us now, therefore, more particularly examine this passage, and we shall find, 1. That it affirms, not that their eyes should be

blinded, or their ears closed, by a Divine agency, as assumed by Mr. Scott and other Calvinists. This notion is not found in Isaiah 6, from which the quotation is made. There the agent is represented to be the prophet himself. "Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes,"

&c. Now as the prophet could exert no secret direct influence over the minds of the disobedient Jews, he must have fulfilled this

commission, if it be taken literally, by preaching to them a fallacious and objurgating doctrine, like that of the false prophets; but if, as we know, he preached no such doctrine, then are the words to be understood according to the genius of the Hebrew language, which often represents him as an agent, who is the occasion, however innocent and undesigned, of any thing being done by another. Thus the prophet, in consequence of the unbelief of the Jews of his day in those promises of

Messiah he was appointed to deliver, and which led him to complain, "Who hath believed our report!" became an occasion to the Jews of "making their own hearts fat, and their ears heavy, and of shutting their eyes" against his testimony. The true agents were, however, the Jews themselves; and by all who knew the genius of the Hebrew language they would be understood as so charged by the prophet. Thus the Septuagint, the Arabic, and the Syriac versions all agree in rendering the text, so that

the people themselves, to whom the prophet wrote, are made the agents of doing that which, in the style of the Hebrews, is ascribed to the prophet himself. So also, it is manifest, that St. Paul, who quotes the same scripture, Acts 28:25-27, understood the prophet; "Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: for the heart of this people is waxed gross,

and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their cars, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." Nor in the passage as it is given by St. John, is the blinding of the eyes of the Jews attributed to God. It stands, it is true, in our version, "He hath blinded their eyes," &c. But the Greek verbs have no nominative case expressed, and it is left to be supplied by the reader. Nor does the context mention the agent;

and farther, if we supply the pronoun he, we cannot refer it to God, since the passage closes with a change of person," and

"should heal them." The agent blinding and hardening, and the agent attempting to "heal,"

cannot, therefore, be the same, because they are opposed to each other, not only grammatically, but in design and operation. That agent, then, may be "the God of this world," to whom the work of blinding them that believe not, is expressly attributed by the

Apostle Paul; or St. John, familiar with the Hebrew style, might refer it to the prophet, who, consequentially, and through the willful perverseness of the Jews, was the occasion of their making their own "hearts gross, and closing their ears;" or, finally, the personal verb may be used impersonally, and the active form for the passive, of which critics furnish parallel instances. (7) But in all these views the true responsible agent and criminal doer is "this people," - this perverse and

obstinate people themselves; a point to which every part of their Scriptures gives abundant testimony.

(7) See Whitby's Paraphrase and Annot. and his Discourse on the Five Points, chap. i.

2. It may be denied that the prophecy of Isaiah here quoted is, as Mr. Scott represents it, "a declaration of God's purpose, which could not be defeated." A simple prophecy is not a declaration of purpose at all; but the declaration of a future event. If a purpose

of God, to be hereafter accomplished, be declared, this declaration becomes more than a simple prophecy: it connects the act with an agent; and in the case before us, that agent is assumed to be God. But we have shown, that the agent in blinding the eyes, and closing the ears of these perverse Jews, is nowhere said to be GOD; and therefore the prophecy is not a declaration of his purpose.

Again, if it were a declaration of God's purpose, it would not

follow that it could not be defeated: for prophetic threatenings are not absolute; but imply conditions. This is so far from being a mere assumption, that it is established by the authority of Almighty God himself, who declares, Jer. 18:7, 8, "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them."

Here we have a prophetic commination uttered;

"at what instant I speak" - "that nation against whom I have pronounced" We have also the purpose in the mind of God - "the evil that I though;" and yet this prediction might fail, and this purpose be defeated. So in the case of repentant Nineveh, the predicted destruction failed, and the wrathful purpose was defeated, without any impeachment of the Divine attributes: on the contrary, they were illustrated by this manifestation of the

mingled justice and grace of his administration. Mr. Scott, like many others, argues as though the prediction of an event gave certainty to it. But the certainty or uncertainty of events is not created by prophecy. Prophecy results from prescience; and prescience has respect to what will be, but not necessarily to what must be. Of this, however, more in its proper place.

3. If this prophecy could be made to bear all that the Calvinists impose upon it, it would not serve their

purpose. It would, even then, afford no proof of general election and reprobation, since it has an exclusive application to the unbelieving part of the Jewish people only; and is never adduced, either by St. John or by St. Paul, as the ground of any general doctrine whatever.

Jude 4, "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men," &c.

The word which is here rendered ordained, is

literally forewritten; and the word rendered condemnation, signifies legal punishment, or judgment. The passage means, therefore, either that the class of men spoken of had been foretold in the Scriptures, or that their punishment had been there formerly typified, in those examples of ancient times, of which several are cited in the following verses; as Cain, Balaam, Korah, and the cities of the plain. Mr. Scott, therefore, very well interprets the text, when he says, "the Lord had

foreseen them, for they were of old, registered to this condemnation: many predictions had, from the beginning, been delivered to this effect." But when he adds, "Nay, these predictions had been extracts, as it were, from the registers of Heaven, even the secret and eternal decrees of God, in which he had determined to leave them to their pride and lusts, till they merited and received this condemnation," we may well ask for the proof. All this is manifestly gratuitous; brought to the

text, and not deduced from it; and is, therefore, very unworthy of a commentator. The "extracts" from the register of God's decrees, as they are found in the Scriptures, contain no such sentiment as that these abusers of the grace of God only did that which they could not but do, in consequence of having been "left to their pride and lusts," and excluded before they were born from the mercies of Christ. If this sentiment then is not in the "extracts," it is not in the original register; or else

something is there which God, in his own revealed word, has not extracted, and respecting which the commentator must either have had some independent revelation, or have been guilty of speaking very rashly.

On the contrary, in the parallel passage in 2 Peter 2:1-3, where the same class of persons is certainly spoken of, so far are they from being represented as excluded from the benefits of Christ's redemption, that they are charged with a specific crime, which

necessarily implies their participation in it, with the crime of "denying the Lord that bought them."

1 Cor. 4:7, "For who maketh thee to differ from another?"

The context shows that the apostle was here endeavoring to repress that ostentation which had arisen among many persons in the Church of Corinth, on account of their spiritual gifts and endowments. This he does by referring those gifts to God, as the sole giver, - "for who maketh thee to

differ?" or who confers superiority upon thee? as the sense obviously is; "and what hast thou that thou didst not receive?" Mr. Scott acknowledges that "the apostle is here speaking more immediately of natural abilities, and spiritual gifts; and not of special and efficacious grace." If so, then the passage has nothing to do with this controversy. The argument he however affirms, concludes equally in one case, as in the other; and in his sermon on election he thus applies it:

"Let the blessings of the Gospel be fairly proposed, with solemn warnings and pressing invitations, to two men of exactly the same character and disposition: if they are left to themselves in entirely similar circumstances, the effect must be precisely the same. But, behold, while one proudly scorns and resents the gracious offer, the other trembles, weeps, prays, repents, believes! Who maketh this man to differ from the other? or what hath he that he hath not received? The Scriptural answer to this

question, when properly understood, decides the whole controversy." (8)

(8) Calvin puts the matter in much the same way, Inst. lib. iii, c. 24

As this is a favorite argument, and a popular dilemma in the hands of the Calvinists, and so much is supposed to depend upon its solution, we may somewhat particularly examine it.

Instead of supposing the case of two men "of exactly the same character and disposition," why not

suppose the same man in two moral states? for one man who "proudly scorns the Gospel"

does not more differ from another who penitently receives it, than the same man who has once scoffingly rejected, and afterward meekly submitted to it, differs from himself; as for instance, Saul the Pharisee from Paul the apostle. Now, to account for the case of two men, one receiving the Gospel, and the other rejecting it, the theory of election is

brought in; but in the case of the one man in two different states, this theory cannot be resorted to. The man was elect from eternity; he is no outcast from the mercy of his God, and the redemption of his Savior, and yet, in one period of his life, he proudly scorns the offered mercy of Christ, at another he accepts it. It is clear, then, that the doctrine of election, simply considered in itself, will not solve the latter case; and by consequence it will not solve the former: for the mere fact, that one man

rejects the Gospel while another receives it, is no more a proof of the non-election of the non-recipient, than the fact of a man now rejecting it, who shall afterward receive it, is a proof of his non-election.

The solution, then, must be sought for in some communication of the grace of God, in some inward operation upon the heart, which is supposed to be a consequence of election; but this leads to another and distinct question. This question is not, however, the

vincibility or invincibility of the grace of God, at least not in the first instance. It is, in truth, whether there is any operation of the grace of God in man at all tending to salvation, in cases where we see the Gospel rejected. Is the man who rejects perseveringly, and he who rejects but for a time, perhaps a long period of his life, left without any good motions or assisting influence from the grace of God, or not? This question seems to admit of but one of three answers. Either he has no gracious assistance at all, to dispose him to

receive the Gospel; or he has a sufficient influence of grace so to dispose him; or that gracious influence is dispensed in an insufficient measure, If the first answer be given, then not only are the non-elect left without any visitations of grace throughout life; but the elect also are left without them, until the moment of their effectual calling. If the second be offered as the answer, then both in the case of the non-elect man who finally rejects Christ, and that of the elect man, who rejects him for a great part of his life, the saving

grace of God must be allowed so to work as to be capable of counteraction, and effectual resistance. If this be denied, then the third answer must be adopted, and the grace of God must be allowed so to influence as to be designedly insufficient for the ends for which it is given; that is, it is given for no saving end at all, either as to the non-elect, or as to the elect all the time they remain in a state of actual alienation from Christ. For if an insufficient degree of grace is bestowed, when a sufficient degree might

have been imparted, then there must have been a reason for restraining the degree of grace to an insufficient measure; which reason could only be, that it might be insufficient, and therefore not saving. Now, two of the three of these positions are manifestly contrary to the word of God. To say that no gracious influence of the Holy Spirit operates upon the unconverted, is to take away their guilt; since they cannot be guilty of rejecting the Gospel if they have no power to embrace it, either from themselves,

or by impartation, while yet the Scripture represents this as the highest guilt of men. All the exhortations, and reproofs, and invitations of Scripture, are, also, by this doctrine, turned into mockery and delusion; and, finally, there can be no such thing in this case, as "resisting the Holy Ghost;" as "grieving and quenching the Spirit;" as "doing despite to the Spirit of grace," either in the case of the non-elect, who are never converted, or of the elect, before conversion: so that the latter have never been guilty of

stubbornness, and obstinacy, and rebellion, and resistance of grace; though these are, by them, afterward, always acknowledged among their sins. Nor did they ever feel any good motion, or drawing from the Spirit of God, before what they term their effectual calling; though, it is presumed, that few, if any of them, will deny this in fact.

If the doctrine, that no grace is imparted before conversion, is then contradicted both by Scripture and experience,

how will the case stand, as to the intentional restriction of that grace to a degree which is insufficient to dispose the subject to the acceptance of the Gospel? If this view be held, it must be maintained equally as to the elect before their conversion, and as to the non-elect. In that case, then, we have equal difficulty in accounting for the guilt of man, as when it is supposed that no grace at all is imparted; and for the reproofs, calls, and invitations, and threatenings of the word of

God. For where lies the difference between the absolute non-impartation of grace, and grace so imparted as to be designedly insufficient for salvation?

Plainly there is none, except that we can see no end at all for giving insufficient grace; a circumstance which would only serve to render still more perplexing the principles and practice of the Divine administration. It has no end of mercy, and none of justice; nor, as far as can be perceived, of

wisdom. Not of mercy, for it effects nothing merciful, and designs not to effect it; not of justice, for it places no man under equitable responsibility; not of wisdom, for it has no assignable end. The Scripture treats all men to whom the Gospel is preached as endowed with power, not indeed from themselves, but from the grace of God, to "turn at his reproof;" to come at his "call;" to embrace his "grace;" but they have no capacity for any of these acts, if either of these opinions be true: and thus

the word of God is contradicted. So also is experience, in both cases; for there could be no sense of guilt for having rejected Christ, and grieved the Holy Spirit, either in the non-elect never converted, or in the elect before conversion, if either they had no visitations of grace at all; or if these were designedly granted in an insufficient degree.

It follows, then, that the doctrine of the impartation of grace to the unconverted, in a sufficient degree to enable them to

embrace the Gospel, must be admitted; and with this doctrine comes in that of a power in man to use, or to spurn this heavenly gift and gracious assistance: in other words, a power of willing to come to Christ, even when men do not come; a power of considering their ways, and turning to the Lord, when they do not consider them, and turn to him; a power of praying, when they do not pray; and a power of believing, when they do not believe: powers all of grace; all the results of the work of the Spirit in the heart;

but powers to be exerted by man, since it is man, and not God, who wills, and turns, and prays, and believes, while the influence under which this is done is from the grace of God alone. This is the doctrine which is clearly contained in the words of St. Paul, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do, of his own good pleasure;"

where, not only the operation of God, but the co-operation of man, are

distinctly marked; and are both held up as necessary to the production of the grand result - "salvation."

It will appear, then, from these observations, that the question, "Who maketh thee to differ!" as urged by Mr. Scott and others from the time of Calvin, is a very inapposite one to their purpose, for.

First, it is a question which the apostle asks with no reference to a difference in religious state, but only with respect to gifts and endowments. Secondly, the Holy Ghost gives no

authority for such an application of his words, as is thus made, in any other part of Scripture. Thirdly, it cannot be employed for the purpose for which it is dragged forth so often from its context and meaning; for, in the use thus made of it, it is falsely assumed, that the two men instanced, the one who rejects, and the other who embraces the Gospel, are not each endowed with sufficient grace to enable them to receive God's gracious offer. Now this, we may again say, must either be denied or

affirmed. If it be affirmed, then the difference between the two men consists, not where they place it, in the destitution or deficiency on the one hand, or in the plenitude on the other, of the grace of GOD; but in the use of grace: and when they say, "it is God which maketh them to differ," they say in fact, that it is God that not only gives sufficient grace to each; but uses that grace for them. For if it be allowed that sufficient grace for repentance and faith is given to each, then the true difference between

them is, that one repents, and the other does not repent; the one believes, and the other does not believe: if, therefore, this difference is to be attributed to God directly, then the act of repenting, and the act of believing, are both the acts of God. If they hesitate to avow this, for it is an absurdity, then either they must give up the question as totally useless to them, or else take the other side of the alternative, that to all who reject the Gospel, sufficient grace to receive it is not given. How then will that

serve them? They may say, it is true, when they take the man who embraces the Gospel, "Who maketh him to differ but God, who gives this sufficient grace to him?" but then we have an equal right to take the man who rejects the Gospel, and ask, "Who maketh him to differ" from the man that embraces it? To this they cannot reply that he maketh himself to differ; for that which they here lay down is, that he has either no grace at all imparted to him to enable him to act as the other; or, what amounts to the same thing,

no sufficient degree of it to produce a true faith; that he never had that grace; that he is, and always must remain, as destitute of it as when he was born. He does not, therefore, make himself to differ from the man who embraces the Gospel; for he has no power to imitate his example, and to make himself equal with him; and the only answer to our question is, "that it is God who maketh him to differ from the other," by with-holding that grace by which alone he could be prevented from rejecting

the Gospel; and this, so far from "settling the whole controversy," is the very point in debate.

This dilemma, then, will prove, when examined, but inconvenient to themselves; for if sufficiency of grace be allowed to the unconverted, then the Calvinists make the acts of grace, as well as the gift of grace itself to be the work of God in the elect: if sufficiency of grace is denied, then the unbelief and condemnation of the wicked are not from them-

selves, but from God. (9) The fact is, that this supposed puzzle has been always used ad captandum; and is unworthy so grave a controversy; and as to the pretence, that the admission of a power in man to use or to abuse the grace of God involves some merit or ground of glorying in man himself, this is equally fallacious. The power " to will and to do," is the sole result of the working of God in man. All is of grace: "By the grace of God," must every one say, "I am what I am." Here is no dispute; every good

thought, desire, and tendency of the heart, and all its power to turn these to practical account by prayer, by faith, by the use of the means of grace, through which new power "to will and to do," new power to use grace, as well as new grace, is communicated, is of God. Every good act, therefore, is the use of a communicated power which is given of grace, as the stretching out of the withered hand of the healed man was the use of the power communicated to his imbecility, and still

working with the act, though not the act itself; and to attempt to lay a ground of boasting and self sufficiency in the assisted acceptance of the grace of God by us; and the empowered submission of our hearts to it, is as manifestly absurd as it would be to say, that the man, whose arm was withered, had great reason to congratulate himself on his share in the glory of the miracle, because he himself stretched out the invigorated member at the command of Christ; and because it was not, in fact,

lifted up by the hand of him who, in that act of faith and obedience, had healed him.

(9) This Calvin scruples not to say, "The supreme Lord, therefore, by depriving of the communication of his light, and leaving in darkness those whom, he has reprobated, makes way for the accomplishment of his own predestination." (Inst. lib. iii, c. 24.) The question of the invincibility of Divine grace, is a point to be in another place considered.

Acts 18:9,10, "Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace, for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee; for I have much people in this city."

Mr. Scott, to whom the doctrine of election is always present, says, "In this Christ evidently spake of those who were his by election, the gift of the Father, and his own purchase; though, at that time, in an unconverted state." (Notes in loc.) It would have been more "evident" had this been

said by the writer of the Acts as well as by Mr. Scott, or any thing approaching to it. The

"evidence," we fear, was all in Mr. Scott's predisposition of mind; for it nowhere else appears.

The expression is, at least, capable of two very satisfactory interpretations, independent of the theory of Calvinistic election. It may mean, that there were many well disposed and serious inquirers among the "Greeks" in Corinth; for when Paul turned from the

Jews, he "entered into the house of Justus, one that worshipped God." This man was a Greek proselyte; and, from various parts of the Acts of the Apostles it is plain, that this class of people were not only numerous, but generally received the Gospel with joy, and were among the first who joined the primitive Churches. They manifested their readiness to receive the Gospel in Corinth itself when the Jews "opposed and blasphemed;" and it is not improbable, that to such proselytes, who were in

many places "a people prepared of the Lord," reference is made, when our Savior, speaking to Paul in this vision, says, "I have much people in this city," Suppose, however, he speaks prospectively and prophetically, making his foreknowledge of an event the means of encouraging the labors of his devoted apostle, the doctrine of election follows neither from the fact of the foreknowledge of God, nor from prophetic declarations grounded upon it. Even Calvin founds not election upon

God's foreknowledge; but upon his decree.

A few other passages might be added, which are sometimes adduced as proofs of the Calvinistic theory of "election" and "distinguishing grace;" but they are all either explained by that view of Scriptural election which has been at large adduced, or are of very obvious interpretation. I believe that I have omitted none, on which any great stress is laid in the controversy; and the reader will judge how far those which have been

examined serve to support those inferences which tend to limit the universal import of those declarations which prove, in the literal sense of the terms, that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, "by the grace of God, tasted death for every man."

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48 THEORIES WHICH LIMIT THE EXTENT OF THE DEATH OF CHRIST

We have, in the foregoing attempt to establish the

doctrine of the redemption of all mankind against our Calvinistic brethren, taken their scheme in the sense in which it is usually understood, without noticing those minute shades with which the system has been varied. In this discussion, it is hoped, that no expression has hitherto escaped inconsistent with candor.

Doctrinal truth would be as little served by this as Christian charity; nor ought it ever to be forgotten by the theological inquirer, that the system

which we have brought under review has, in some of its branches, always embodied, and often preserved in various parts of Christendom, that truth which is vital to the Church, and salutary to the souls of men. It has numbered, too, among its votaries, many venerable names; and many devoted and holy men, whose writings often rank among the brightest lights of Scriptural criticism and practical divinity. We think the peculiarities of their creed clearly opposed to the sense of Scripture, and

fairly chargeable in argument with all those consequences we have deduced from them; and which, were it necessary to the discussion, might be characterized in still stronger language. Those consequences, however, let it be observed, we only exhibit as logical ones. By many of this class of divines they are denied; by others modified; and by a third party explained away to their own satisfaction by means of metaphysical and subtle distinctions. As logical consequences only they are, therefore, in such

cases, fairly to be charged upon our opponents, in any disputes which may arise. By keeping this distinction in view, the discussion of these points may be preserved unfettered; and candor and charity sustain no wound.

We shall now proceed to justify the general view we have taken of the Calvinistic doctrine of election, predestination, and partial redemption, by adducing the sentiments of Calvin himself, and of Calvinistic theologians and Churches; after which our

attention may be directed, briefly, to some of those more modern modifications of the system, which, though they differ not, as we think, so materially, from the original model as some of their advocates suppose, yet make concessions not unimportant to the more liberal, and, as we believe, the only Scriptural theory.

Calvin has at large opened his sentiments on election, in the third book of his Institutes. (The following quotations are made from Alien's translation.

London, 1823.) "Predestination we call the eternal decree of God; by which he hath determined in himself what he would have to become of every individual of mankind. For they are not all created with similar destiny; but eternal life is foreordained for some, and eternal damnation for others. Every man, therefore, being created for one or other of these ends, we say, he is predestinated, either to life, or to death." After having spoken of the election of the race of Abraham, and then of

particular branches of that race, he proceeds, "Though it is sufficiently clear that God, in his secret counsel, freely chooses whom he will, and rejects others, his gratuitous election is but half displayed till we come to particular individuals, to whom God not only offers salvation, but assigns it in such a manner, that the certainty of the effect is liable to no suspense or doubt." He sums up the chapter, in which he thus generally states the doctrine, in these words: (chap. 21, book iii:) "In conformity, therefore, to

the clear doctrine of the Scripture, we assert, that by an eternal and immutable counsel, God hath once for all determined both whom he would admit to salvation, and whom he would condemn to destruction. We affirm that this counsel, as far as concerns the elect, is founded on his gratuitous mercy, totally irrespective of human merit; but that to those whom he devotes to condemnation, the gate of life is closed by a just and irreprehensible, but incomprehensible

judgment. In the elect, we consider calling as an evidence of election; and justification as another token of its manifestation, till they arrive in glory, which constitutes its completion. As God seals his elect by vocation and justification, so by excluding the reprobate from the knowledge of his name, and sanctification of his Spirit, he affords an other indication of the judgment that awaits them."

In the commencement of the following chapter (book

iii, chap. 22,) he thus rejects the notion that predestination is to be understood as resulting from God's foreknowledge of what would be the conduct of either the elect or the reprobate. "It is a notion commonly entertained, that God, foreseeing what would be the respective merits of every individual, makes a correspondent distinction between different persons; that he adepts as his children such as he foreknows will be deserving of his grace; and devotes to the damnation

of death others, whose dispositions he sees will be inclined to wickedness and impiety. Thus they not only obscure election by covering it with the veil of fore-knowledge, but pretend that it originates in another cause." Consistently with this, he a little farther on asserts, that election does not flow from holiness; but holiness from election. "For when it is said, that the faithful are elected that they should be holy, it is fully implied, that the holiness they were in future to possess, had its origin in election," He

proceeds to quote the example of Jacob and Esau, as loved and hated before they had done good or evil, to show that the only reason of election and reprobation is to be placed in God's "secret counsel."

He will not allow the future wickedness of the reprobate to have been considered in the decree of their rejection, any more than the righteous, ness of the elect as influencing their better fate.

"God hath mercy on whom he will have mercy; and whom he will he

hardeneth. You see how he (the apostle) attributes both to the mere will of God. If, therefore, we can assign no reason why he grants mercy to his people, but because such is his pleasure, neither shall we find any other cause but his will for the reprobation of others. For when God is said to harden, or show mercy to whom he pleases, men are taught by this declaration, to seek no cause beside his will" (Book iii, chap. 22.)- "Many, indeed, as if they wished to avert odium from God, admit election in such a

way as to deny that any one is reprobated. But this is puerile and absurd; because election itself could not exist with-out being opposed to reprobation:- whom God passes by, he therefore reprobates; and from no other cause than his determination to exclude them from the inheritance which he predestines for his children." (Book iii, chap. 23.) This is the scheme of predestination as exhibited by Calvin; and it is remarkable, that the answers which he is compelled to give to

objections did not unfold to this great and acute man its utter contrariety to the testimony of God, and to all established notions of equity among men. To the objection taken from justice, he replies, "They (the objectors) inquire by what right the Lord is angry with his creatures who had not provoked him by any previous offence; for that to devote to destruction whom he pleases, is more like the caprice of a tyrant, than the lawful sentence of a judge. If such thoughts ever enter into the minds of pious

men, they will be sufficiently enabled to break their violence by this one consideration, how exceedingly presumptuous it is, only to inquire into the causes of the Divine will; which is, in fact, and is justly entitled to be, the cause of every thing that exists. For if it has any cause, then there must be something antecedent on which it depends, which it is impious to suppose. For the will of God is the highest rule of justice; so that what he wills must be considered just, for this

very reason, because he wills it."

The evasions are here curious. 1. He assumes the very thing in dispute, that God has willed the destruction of any part of the human race, "for no other cause than because he wills it;" of which assumption there is not only not a word of proof in Scripture; but, on the contrary, all Scripture ascribes the death of him that dieth to his own will, and not to the will of GOD; and therefore contradicts his statement. 2. He

pretends that to assign any came to the Divine will is to suppose something antecedent to, something above God, and, therefore, "impious;" as if we might not suppose something in God to be the rule of his will, not only without any impiety, but with truth and piety; as, for instance, his perfect wisdom, holiness, justice, and goodness: or, in other words, to believe the exercise of his will to flow from the perfection of his whole nature; a much more honorable and Scriptural view of the will of God than that which

subjects it to no rule, even in the nature of God himself. 3. When he calls the will of God, "the highest rule of justice,"

beyond which we cannot push our inquiries, he confounds the will of God, as a rule of justice to us, and as a rule to himself. This will is our rule; yet even then, because we know that it is the will of a perfect being; but when Calvin represents mere will as constituting God's own rule of justice, he shuts out knowledge, discrimination of the nature of things, and

holiness; which is saying something very different to that great truth, that God cannot will any thing but what is perfectly just. It is to say that blind will, will which has no respect to any thing but itself, is God's highest rule of justice; a position which, if presented abstractedly, many of the most ultra Calvinists would spurn. 4. He determines the question by the authority of his own metaphysics, and totally forgets that one dictum of inspiration overturns his whole theory, - God "willeth all men to be

saved:" a declaration, which, in no part of the sacred volume, is opposed or limited by any contrary declaration.

Calvin is not, however, content thus to leave the matter; but resorts to an argument in which he has been generally followed by those who have adopted his system with some mitigations. "As we are all corrupted by sin, we must necessarily be odious to God, and that not from tyrannical cruelty; but in the most equitable estimation of justice. If all

whom the Lord predestinates to death are, in their natural condition, liable to the sentence of death, what injustice do they complain of receiving from him?" To this Calvin very fairly states the obvious rejoinder made in his day; and which the common sense of mankind will always make, - "They object, were they not by the decree of God antecedently predestinated to that corruption which is now slated as the cause of their condemnation? When they perish in their corruption, therefore, they only suffer

the punishment of that misery into which, in consequence of his predestination, Adam fell, and precipitated his posterity with him." The manner in which Calvin attempts to refute this objection, shows how truly unanswerable it is upon his system. "I confess," says he, "indeed, that all the descendants) of Adam fell, by the Divine will, into that miserable condition in which they are now involved; and this is what I asserted from the beginning, that we must always return at last to the

sovereign determination of God's will; the cause of which is hidden in himself. But it follows not, therefore, that God is liable to this reproach; for we will answer them in the language of Paul,' O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?'" - That is, in order to escape the pinch of the objection, he assumes, that St. Paul affirms that God has "formed" a part of the human race for eternal misery; and that by

imposing silence upon them, he intended to declare that this proceeding in God was just. Now the passage may be proved from the context to mean no such thing; but, if that failed, and it were more obscure in its meaning than it really is, such an interpretation would be contradicted by many other plain texts of Holy Writ, of which Calvin takes no notice. Even if this text would serve the purpose better, it gives no answer to the objection; for we are brought round again, as indeed Calvin

confesses, to his former, and indeed only argument, that the whole matter, as he states it, is to be referred back to the Divine will; which will, though perfectly arbitrary, is, as he contends, the highest rule of justice. "I say, with Augustine, that the Lord created those whom he certainly foreknew would fall into destruction; and that this was actually so, because he willed it; but of his will, it belongs not to us to demand the reason, which we are incapable of comprehending: nor is it reasonable that the Divine

will should be made the subject of controversy with us, which is only another name for the highest rule of justice." Thus he shuts us out from pursuing the argument. When God places fences against our approach, we grant, that we are bound not "to break through and gaze;" but not so, when man, without authority, usurps this authority, and warns us off from his own inclosures, as though we were trespassing upon the peculiar domains of God himself. Calvin's evasion proves the objection unanswerable.

For if all is to be resolved into the mere will of God as to the destruction of the reprobate; if they were created for this purpose, as Calvin expressly affirms; if they fell into their corruption in pursuance of God's determination; if, as he had said before,

"God passes them by, and reprobates them, from no other cause than his determination to exclude them from the inheritance of his children," why refer to their natural corruption at all, and their being odious to God in that state,

since the same reason is given for their corruption as for their reprobation?- Not any fault of theirs; but the mere will of God, "the reprobation hidden in his secret counsel," and not grounded on the visible and tangible fact of their de merit. Thus the election taught by Calvin is not a choice of some persons to peculiar grace from the whole mass, equally deserving of punishment; (though this is a sophism;) for, in that case, the decree of reprobation would rest upon God's foreknowledge of those passed by as

corrupt and guilty, which notion he rejects. "For since God foresees future events only in consequence of his decree that they shall happen, it is useless to contend about foreknowledge, while it is evident that all things come to pass rather by ordination and decree. It is a horrible decree, I confess; but no one can deny that God foreknew the future fate of man before he created him; and that he did foreknow it, because it was appointed by his own decree." Agreeably to this, he repudiates the

distinction between will and permission. "For what reason shall we assign for his permitting it, but because it is his will? It is not probable, however, that man procured his own destruction by the mere permission, and without any appointment of God."

With this doctrine he again makes a singular attempt to reconcile the demerit of men:- "Their perdition depends on the Divine predestination in such a manner, that the cause and matter of it are found in themselves. For the first

man fell because the Lord had determined it should so happen. The reason of this determination is unknown to us. Man, therefore, falls according to the appointment of Divine providence; but he falls by his own fault, The Lord had a little before pronounced every thing that he had made to be 'very good.' Whence, then, comes the depravity of man to revolt from his God? Lest it should be thought to come from creation, God approved and commended what had proceeded from himself. By his own

wickedness, therefore, man corrupted the nature he had received pure from the Lord, and by his fall he drew all his posterity with him to destruction." It is in this way that Calvin attempts to avoid the charge of making God the author of sin. But how God should not merely permit the defection of the first man, but appoint it, and will it, and that his will should be the "necessity of things," all which he had before asserted, and yet that Deity should not be the author of that which he appointed, willed, and

imposed a necessity upon, would be rather a delicate inquiry. It is enough that Calvin rejects the impious doctrine, and even though his principles directly lead to it, since he has put in his disclaimer, he is entitled to be ex-empted from the charge;- but the logical conclusion is inevitable.

In much the same manner he contends that the necessity of sinning is laid upon the reprobate by the ordination of God, and yet denies God to be the author of their sin, since the corruption of men was

derived from Adam, by his own fault, and not from God. Here, also, although the difficulty still remains of conceiving how a necessity of sinning should be laid on the descendants of Adam, and that without any counteraction of grace in the case of the reprobate, and that this should be attributable to the will of God as its cause, while yet God, in no sense injurious to his perfections, is to be regarded as the author of sin, we still admit Calvin's disclaimer; but then he cannot have the advantage on both sides,

and must renounce this or some of his former positions. He exhorts us "rather to contemplate the evident cause of condemnation, which is nearer to us, in the corrupt nature of mankind, than search after a hidden, and altogether incomprehensible one, in the predestination of God." "For, though, by the eternal providence of God, man was created to that misery to which he is subject, yet the ground of it he has derived from himself, not GOD; since he is thus ruined, solely in

consequence of his having degenerated from the pure creation of God to vicious and impure depravity." Thus, almost in the same breath, he affirms that men became reprobate from no other cause than "the will of God," and his

"sovereign determination;" - that men have no reason "to expostulate with God, if they are predestinated to eternal death, without any demerit of their own, merely by his sovereign will;" -

and then, that the corrupt nature of mankind is the

evident and nearer cause of condemnation; (which cause, however, was still a matter of "appointment," and "ordination," not "permission;") and that man is "ruined solely in consequence of his having degenerated from the pure state in which God created him." Now these propositions manifestly fight with each other; for if the reason of reprobation be laid in man's corruption, it cannot be laid in the mere will and sovereign determination of God, unless we suppose him to be the author of sin. It is

this offensive doctrine only which can reconcile them. For if God so wills, and appoints, and necessitates the depravity of man, as to be the author of it, then there is no inconsistency in saying that the ruin of the reprobate is both from the mere will of God, and from the corruption of their nature, which is but the result of that will. The one is then, as Calvin states, the "evident and nearer cause," the other the more remote and hidden one; yet they have the same source, and are substantially acts of the same will. But if it be

denied that God is, in any sense, the author of evil, and if sin is from man alone, then is the "corruption of nature" the effect of an independent will; and if this be the

"real source," as he says, of men's condemnation, then the decree of reprobation rests not upon the sovereign will of God, as its sole cause, which he affirms; but upon a cause dependent on the will of the first man. But as this is denied, then the other must follow. Calvin himself indeed contends for the

perfect concurrence of these proximate and remote causes, although, in point of fact, to have been perfectly consistent with himself, he ought rather to have called the mere will of God the cause of the decree of reprobation, and the corruption of man the means by which it is carried into effect: language which he sanctions, and which many of his followers have not scrupled to adopt.

So fearfully does this opinion involve in it the consequences that in sin

man is the instrument, and God the actor, that it cannot be maintained, as stated by Calvin, without this conclusion. For as two causes of reprobation are expressly laid down, they must be either opposed to each other, or be consenting. If they are opposed, the scheme is given up; if consenting, then are both reprobation and human corruption the results of the same will, the same decree and necessity. It would be trifling to say that the decree does not influence; for if so, it is no decree in Calvin's sense,

who understands the decree of God, as the foregoing extracts and the whole third book of his Institutes plainly show, as appointing what shall be, and by that appointment making it necessary. Otherwise he could not reject the distinction between will and permission, and avow the sentiment of St. Augustine, "that the will of God is the necessity of things; and that what he has willed will necessarily come to pass." (Book iii, chap. 23, sec. 8.) So, in writing to Castalio, he makes the sin of Adam

the result of an act of God. "You say Adam fell by his free will. I except against it. That he might not fall, he stood in need of that strength and constancy with which God armeth all the elect, as long as he will keep them blameless. Whom God has elected, he props up with an invincible power unto perseverance. Why did he not afford this to Adam, if he would have had him stand in his integrity?" (1) And with this view of necessity, as resulting from the decree of God, the immediate followers of Calvin

coincide; the end and the means, as to the elect, and as to the reprobate, are equally fixed by the decree; and are both to be traced to the appointing and ordaining will of God. On such a scheme it is, therefore, worse than trifling to attempt to make out a case of justice in favor of this assumed Divine procedure, by alleging the corruption and guilt of man: a point which, indeed, Calvin himself, in fact, gives up when he says, "that the reprobate obey not the word of God, when made known to them, is

justly imputed to the wickedness and depravity of their hearts, provided it be at the same time stated, that they are abandoned to this depravity, because they have been raised up by a just, but inscrutable judgment of God, to display his glory in their condemnation." (Inst. book iii, chap. 24. sec. 14.) (1) Quoted in Bishop Womack's Calvinist Cabinet Unlocked p. 34.

It is by availing themselves of these ineffectual struggles of Calvin to give some color of justice to his

reprobating decree, by fixing upon the corruption of man as a cause of reprobation, that some of his followers have endeavored, in the very teeth of his own express words, to reduce his system to supralapsarianism. This was attempted by Amyraldus; who was answered by Curcelloeus, in his tract "De Jure Dei in Creaturas." This last writer, partly by several of the same passages we have given above from Calvin's Institutes, and by extracts from his other writings, proves that Calvin did by

no means consider man, as fallen, to be the object of reprobation; but man not yet created; man as to be created, and so reprobated, under no consideration in the Divine mind of his fall or actual guilt, except as consequences of an eternal preterition of the persons of the reprobate, resolvable only into the sovereign pleasure of God.

The references he makes to men as corrupt, and to their corrupt state as the proximate cause of their rejection, are all manifestly used to parry off rather

than to answer objections, and somewhat to soften, as Curcelloeus observes, the harsher parts of his system. And, indeed, for what reason are we so often brought back to that unfailing refuge of Calvin and his followers,

"the presumption and wickedness of replying against God?" For if reprobation be a matter of human desert, it cannot be a mystery; if it be adequate punishment for an adequate fault, there is no need to urge it upon us to bow with sub-mission to an

unexplained sovereignty. We may add, there is no need to speak of a remote or first cause of reprobation, if the proximate cause will explain the whole case; and that, Calvin's continual reference to God's secret counsel, and will, and inscrutable judgment. could have no aptness to his argument. (2) Among English divines, Dr. Twiss has sufficiently defended Calvin from the charge, as he esteems it, of sublapsarianism; and, whatever merit Twiss's own supralapsarian creed may

have, his argument on this point is unanswerable.

(2) Amyraldus tamen, ut eum infra lapsum substitisse probet, in constituendo reprobationis objecto, profert quaedam loca in quibus ille corruptae massae meminit, et hujus decreti aequitatem ab originali peccato arcessit, Sed facilis est responsio. Nam Calvinus ipse, qua ratione ista cum is quae attuli sint concilianda nos docet nimirum adhibita distinctione inter propinquam reprobationis

causam, quam resi-dentem in nobis corruptionem esse vult, et remotam, quae sit unicum Dei bene-placitum. Et quanquam variis in locis causam propinquam, veluti ad sententiae suae duritiem emolliendam aptiorem, magis videatur urgere; ita tamen id facit ut non raro consilii arcani, voluntatis occultae, judicii inscrutabilis, et similium, qui-bus primam rejectionis causam solet designare, ibidem simul meminerit. (De Jure Dei, &c, cap. x.) This then is the doctrine of Calvin, which was followed by several of the Churches

of the reformation, who in this respect distinguished themselves from the Lutherans. (3) It was a doctrine, however, unknown in the primitive Churches; and may be ranked among those errors which the pagan philosophy subsequently engrafted upon the faith of Christ. (4) (3) "The Reformed Church, in the largest import of the word, comprises all the religious communities which have separated themselves from the Church of Rome. In this sense the words are often used by English

writers; but having been adopted by the French Calvinists to describe their Church, this term is most commonly used on the continent as a general appellation of all the Churches who profess the doctrines of Calvin. About the year 1541, the Church of Geneva was placed by the magistrates of that city under the direction of Calvin, where his learning, eloquence, and talents for business, soon attracted general notice. By degrees his fame reached to every part of Europe. Having prevailed upon the senate

of Geneva to found an academy, and place it under his superintendence; and having filled it with men, eminent throughout Europe for their learning and talent, it became the favorite resort of all persons who leaned to the new principles, and sought religious and literary instruction. From Germany, France, Italy, England, and Scotland, numbers crowded to the new academy, and returned from it to their native countries, saturated with the doctrine of

Geneva; and burning with zeal to propagate its creed."

(Butler's Life of Grotius.)

(4) This was the view of Melancthon, who, in writing to Peucer, says, "Laelius writes to me, and says, that the controversy respecting the stoical fate is agitated with such uncommon fervor at Geneva, that one individual is cast into prison because he happened to differ from Zeno."

Bishop Tomline's "Refutation of Calvinism," although very erroneous in

some of its doctrinal views, has some valuable and conclusive quotations from the ancient fathers, proving "that the peculiar tenets of Calvinism are in direct opposition to the doctrines maintained in the first ages."

They also show that there is a great similarity between some points in that system and several of the most prevalent of the early heresies. "The Manicheans denied the freedom of the human will; and spoke of the elect as persons who could not sin,

or fail of salvation." The fruitful source of these notions was the Gnosticism of early times, which was the worst part of the speculative pagan philosophy, engrafted on a corrupted Christianity; and was vigorously opposed by the fathers, from the earliest date. In this system of affected and dreaming wisdom it was assumed, that some souls were created bad, and others good; and that they sprung, therefore, from different principles, or creators. Origen contended, in opposition to these

speculations, that all souls were by nature of the same quality; that the use of the freedom of will made the differences we see in practice; and that this liberty rendered them liable to reward and to punishment; ascribing, however, this recovered freedom of the will, which had been lost in Adam, to the grace of Christ. The Platonism which he mixed up with his system was justly resisted in the Church; but his doctrine of the freedom of the will prevailed generally in the east. It was afterward

carried to a dangerous extent by Pelagius, whose doctrine was modified by Cassian.

These discussions called Augustine into a controversy, which carried him to the opposite extreme; and appears to have revived the Manichean notions of his youth in such a degree as greatly to tinge many parts of his system with that heresy. He was a powerful, but unsteady writer; and has expressed himself so inconsistently as to have divided the opinions of the

Latin Church, where his authority has always been greatest. He held, alt hough his writings afford many pas-sages contradictory of the statement, that "God, from the foundation of the world, decreed to save some men, and to consign others to eternal punishment."

Notwithstanding his authority, his views on predestination and grace appear to have made no great impression upon even the western Church, where the Collations of Cassian, a disciple of Chrysostom, a work which

has been called semi-Pelagian, was held in extensive estimation; so that substantially no great difference of opinion appeared between the western and the Greek Churches, on these points, for several centuries. In the ninth century St. Austin's doctrines were revived and asserted by Goteschale, who was as absurdly as wickedly persecuted on that account. His doctrines were condemned in two councils; and the controversy was laid to rest, until the subtle questions contained in it

were revived by the schoolmen. Thomas Aquinas and the Dominicans adopted the strongest views of Augustine on predestination and necessity, and improved upon them; Scotus and the Franciscans took the opposite side; and the infallibility of the pope has not yet been employed to settle this point. By condemning Jansenius, however, while it has honoured Augustine, that Church, as Bayle observes, (Dictionary, Art. Augustine,) has involved

itself in great perplexities. The authority of this father with the Church of Rome was indeed an advantage which the first reformers did not fail to make use of. From him they supported their views on justification by faith; and finding so much of evangelical truth on this and some other subjects in his writings, they were insensibly biased to the worst parts of his system. Luther re-covered from this error in the latter part of his life; and the Lutheran Churches settled in the doctrine of universal redemption. (5)

Augustinism, as perfected and systematized by the able hand of Calvin, was received by several of the reformed Churches; and gave rise to a controversy which has remained to this day, though happily it has of late been conducted with less asperity. The system, as issued by Calvin, has, however, undergone various modifications; some theologians and their followers, having carried out his principles to their full length, so as to advocate or sanction the Antinomian heresy, while others, either to avoid this

fearful result, or perceiving the discrepancy of the harsher parts of the theory with the word of God, have impressed upon it a more mitigated aspect.

(5) "It is pleasing," says Dr. Copleston, "and satisfactory, to trace the progress of Melancthon's opinions upon the subject. In the first dawning of the reformation he, as well as Luther, had been led into those metaphysical discussions which Calvin afterward molded into a system, and incorporated with his exposition of the

Christian doctrine. But so early as the year 1529 he renounced this error, and expunged the passages that contained it from the later editions of his Loci Theologici. Luther, who had in his early life maintained the same opinions, after the controversy with Erasmus about free will, never taught them; and although he did not, with the candor of Melancthon, openly retract what he had once written, yet he bestowed the highest commendations on the last editions of Melancthon's

Work, containing this correction, (Preface to the first volume of Luther's Works, A D. 154G.) He also scrupled not to assert publicly, that at the beginning of the reformation, his creed was not completely settled: (Laur. Bampt. Lect. note 21 to Sermon ii:) and in his last work of any importance, he is anxious to point out the qualifications with which all he had ever said, on the doctrine of absolute necessity, ought to be received." "Vos ergo, qui nunc me audistis,

memineritis me hoc docuisse, non esse inquirendum de Praedestinatione Dei absconditi, sed in illis acquiescendum, quae revelantur per vocationem et per ministerium verbi,..,. Haec eadem alibi quoque in meis libris protestatus sum, et nuno etiam viva voce trado: Idea sum excusatus, (Op vol. vi, p. 325.) The three leading schemes of predestination, prevalent among the reformed Churches previous to the synod of Dort, are thus stated in the celebrated Declaration of

Arminius before the states of Holland. They comprehend the theories generally known by the names of supralapsarian and sublapsarian.

"The first, or Creabilitarian, or supralapsarian opinion, is, 1. That God has absolutely and precisely decreed to save certain particular men by his mercy or grace; but to condemn others by his justice; and to do all this, without having any regard in such decree to righteousness or sin, obedience or disobedience,

which could possibly exist on the part of one class of men, or the other. 2. That for the execution of the preceding decree, God determined to create Adam, and all men in him, in an upright state of original righteousness; beside which, he also ordained them to commit sin, that they might thus become guilty of eternal condemnation, and be deprived of original righteousness. 3. That those persons whom God has thus positively wished to save, he has decreed, not only to salvation, but also

to the means which pertain to it; that is, to conduct and bring them to faith in Christ Jesus, and to perseverance in that faith; and that he also leads them to these results by a grace and power that are irresistible; so that it is not possible for them to do otherwise than believe, persevere in faith, and be saved 4. That to those, whom, by his absolute will, God has foreordained to perdition, he has also decreed to deny that grace which is necessary and sufficient for salvation; and does not, in reality, confer it upon

them; so that they are neither placed in a possible condition, nor in any capacity of believing, or of being saved."

(6)

(6) This statement of the supralapsarian and sublapsarian theories, as given by Arminius, might be illustrated and verified by quotations from the elder Calvinistic divines: the reader will, however, find what is amply sufficient in those given in Bishop Womack's Calvinistic Cabinet Unlocked.

The second opinion differs from the former; but is still supralapsarian. It is, -

"1. That God determined within himself, by an eternal immutable decree, to make, according to his good pleasure, the smaller portion out of the general mass of mankind, partakers of his grace and glory. But, according to his pleasure, he passed by the greater portion of men, and left them in their own nature, which is incapable of any thing super-natural; and did not communicate to them that saving and

supernatural grace by which their nature, if it still retained its integrity, might be strengthened; or by which, if it were corrupted, it might be restored, for a demonstration of his own liberty: yet after God had made these men sinners, and guilty of death, he punished them with death eternal, for a demonstration of his justice." - "As far as we are capable of comprehending their scheme of reprobation, it consists of two acts, that of preterition, and that of predamnation. preterition

is antecedent to all things, and to all causes which are either in the things themselves, or which arise out of them; that is, it has no regard whatever to any sin, and only views man under an absolute and general aspect. Two means are foreordained for the execution of the act of preterition: dereliction in a state of nature which, by itself, is incapable of every thing supernatural; and the non-communication of supernatural grace, by which their nature, if in a state of integrity, might be strengthened, and if in a

state of corruption, might be restored. predamnation is antecedent to all things; yet it does by no means exist without a fore-knowledge of the cause of damnation. It views man as a sinner obnoxious to damnation in Adam, and as, on this account, perishing through the necessity of Divine justice."

This opinion differs from the first in this, that it does not lay down the creation or the fall as a mediate cause, foreordained of God for the execution of the decree of reprobation; yet

this second kind of predestination places election, with regard to the end, before the fall, as also preterition, or passing by, which is the first part of reprobation. "But though the inventors of this scheme," says Arminius, "have been desirous of using the greatest precaution, lest it might be concluded from their doctrine, that God is the author of sin with as much show of probability as it is deducible from the first scheme; yet we shall discover, that the fall of Adam cannot possibly,

according to their views, be considered in any other manner than as a necessary means for the execution of the preceding decree of predestination. For, first, it states that God determined by the decree of reprobation to deny to man that grace which was necessary for the confirmation and strengthening of his nature, that it might not be corrupted by sin; which amounts to this, that God decreed not to bestow that grace which was necessary to avoid sin; and from this must necessarily follow the

transgression of man, as proceeding from a law imposed upon him. The fall of man is, therefore, a means ordained for the execution of the decree of reprobation."

"2. It states the two parts of reprobation to be preterition and pre-damnation. Those two parts, (although the latter views man as a sinner, and obnoxious to justice,) are, according to that decree, connected together by a necessary and mutual bond, and are equally extensive; for those whom

God passed by in conferring grace, are likewise damned. Indeed, no others are damned except those who are the subjects of this act of preterition. From this, therefore, it must be concluded, that sin necessarily follows from the decree of reprobation or preterition; because, if it were otherwise, it might possibly happen, that a person who had been passed by might not commit sin, and from that circumstance might not become liable to damnation. This second

opinion on predestination, therefore, falls into the same inconvenience as the first, - the making God the author of sin." (Declaration.)

The third opinion is sublapsarian; in which man, as the object of predestination, is considered as fallen. (7) It is thus epitomized by Arminius:-

(7) The question as to the object of the decrees has gone out, as Goodwin says, among our Calvinistic brethren into "endless digladiations and

irreconcilable divisions:- some of them hold, that men simply and indefinitely considered, are the object of these decrees. Others contend, that men considered as yet to be created, are this object. A third sort stands up against both the former with this notion, that men considered as already created, and made, are this object. A fourth disparages the conjectures of the three former with this conceit, that men considered as fallen, are this object. Another findeth a defect in the single-ness or

simplicity of all the former opinions, and compoundeth this in opposition to them, that men considered both as to be created, and as being created and as fallen, together, are the proper object of these troublesome decrees. A sixth sort formeth us yet another object, and this is, man considered as salvable, or capable of being saved. A seventh not liking the faint complexion of any of the former opinions, delivereth this to us as strong and healthful, that men considered as damnable,

are this object. Others yet again, superfancying all the former, conceit men, considered as matte, or possible to be created, to be the object so highly contested about. A ninth party disciple the world with this doctrine, that men considered as labiles, or capable of falling, are the object; and whether all the scattered and conflicting opinions about the objects of our brethren's decrees of election and reprobation, are bound up in this bundle or not, we cannot say."

(Agreement of Brethren, &c.)

In modern times these subtitle distinctions have rather fallen into desuetude among Calvinists, and are reducible to a much smaller number.

"Because God willed within himself from all eternity to make a decree by which he might elect certain men and reprobate the rest, he viewed and considered the human race not only as created, but likewise as fallen or corrupt; and, on that account, obnoxious to

malediction. Out of this lapsed and accursed state God determined to liberate certain individuals, and freely to save them by his grace, for a declaration of his mercy; but he resolved in his own just judgment, to leave the rest under malediction, for a declaration of his justice. In both these cases God acts without the least consideration of repentance and faith in those whom he elects, or of impenitence and unbelief in those whom he reprobates. This opinion places the fall of man, not as a

means foreordained for the execution of the decree of predestination, as before explained; but as something that might furnish a proaeresis, or occasion for this decree of predestination."

(Declaration.)

With this opinion, however, the necessity of the fall is so generally connected, that it escapes the difficulties which environ the preceding scheme in words only; for whether, in the decree of predestination, man is considered as creatable, or

created and fallen, if a necessity be laid upon any part of the race to sin, and to be made miserable, whether from that which rendered the fall inevitable, or that which rendered the fall the inevitable means of corrupting their nature, and producing entire moral disability without relief, the condition of the reprobate remains substantially the same; and the administration under which they are placed, is equally opposed to justice as to grace. For let us shut out all these fine distinctions between acts of

sovereignty and acts of justice, preterition and predamnation, and fully allow the principle, that all are fallen in Adam, in what way can even the sublapsarian doctrine be supported? It has two objects; to avoid the imputation of making God the author of sin, and to repel the charge of his dealing with his creatures unjustly. We need only take the latter as necessary to the argument, and show how utterly they fail to turn aside this most fatal objection drawn from the

justice of the Divine nature and administration.

It is an easy and plausible thing to say, in the usual loose and general manner of stating the sublapsarian doctrine, that the whole race having fallen in Adam, and become justly liable to eternal death, God might, without any impeachment of his justice, in the exercise of his sovereign grace, appoint some to life and salvation by Christ, and leave the others to their deserved punishment. But this is a false view of the case, built upon the

false assumption that the whole race were personally and individually, in consequence of Adam's fall, absolutely liable to eternal death. That very fact which is the foundation of the whole scheme, is easy to be refuted on the clearest authority of Scripture; while not a passage can be adduced, we may boldly affirm, which sanctions any such doctrine.

"The wages of sin is death." That the death which is the wages or penalty of sin extends to eternal death, we have before proved. But

"sin is the transgression of the law;" and in no other light is it represented in Scripture, when eternal death is threatened as its penalty, than as the act of a rational being sinning against a law known or knowable; and as an act avoidable, and not forced or necessary.

Taking these principles, let them be applied to the case before us.

The scheme of predestination in question contemplates the human race as fallen in Adam. It must, therefore,

contemplate them either as seminally in Adam, not being yet born; or as to be actually born into the world.

In the former case, the only actual beings to be charged with sin, "the transgression of the law,"

were Adam and Eve; for the rest of the human race not being actually existent, were not capable of transgressing; or if they were, in a vague sense, capable of it by virtue of the federal character of Adam; yet then only as potential, and not as actual

beings, beings, as the logicians say, in posse, not in esse. Our first parents rendered themselves liable to eternal death. This is granted; and had they died "in the day" they sinned, which, but for the introduction of a system of mercy and long suffering, and the appointment of a new kind of probation, for any thing that appears, they must have done, the human race would have perished with them, and the only conscious sinners would have been the only conscious sufferers. But then this lays no

foundation for election and reprobation;- the whole race would thus have perished without the vouchsafement of mercy to any.

This predestination must, therefore, respect the human race fallen in Adam, as to be born actually, and to have a real as well as a potential existence; and the doctrine will be, that the race so contemplated were made unconditionally liable to eternal death. In this case the decree takes effect immediately upon the fall, and determines the

condition of every individual, in respect to his being elected from this common misery, or his being left in it; and it rests its plea of justice upon the assumed fact, that every man is absolutely liable to eternal death wholly and entirely for the sin of Adam, a sin to which he was not a consenting party, because he was not in actual existence. But if eternal death be the "wages of sin;" and the sin which receives such wages be the transgression of a law by a voluntary agent, (and this is the rule as laid down by

God himself,) then on no Scriptural principle is the human race to be considered absolutely liable to personal and conscious eternal death for the sin of Adam; and so the very ground assumed by the advocates of this theory is unfounded.

But perhaps they will bring into consideration the foreknowledge of actual transgression as contemplated by the decree, though this notion is repudiated by Calvin, and the rigid divines of his school; but we reply to this,

that either the sin of Adam was a sufficient reason for the actual infliction of a sentence of eternal death upon his descendants, or it was not. If not, then no man will be punished with eternal death, as the consequence of Adam's sin, and that sentence will rest upon actual transgressions alone. If, then, this be allowed, there comes in an important inquiry: Are the actual transgressions of the non-elect evitable, or necessary? If the former, then even the reprobate, without the grace of Christ, which they cannot have,

because he died not for them, may avoid all sin, and consequently keep the whole law of God and claim, though still reprobates, to be justified by their works. But if sin be unavoidable and necessary as to them, in consequence both of the corrupt nature they have derived from Adam, and the withholding of that sanctifying influence which can be imparted only to the elect, for whom alone Christ died, how are they to be proved justly liable, on that account, to eternal death? This is the penalty of sin, of

sin as the transgression of the law; but then law is given only to creatures in a state of trial, either to those who, from their unimpaired powers, are able to keep it; or to those to whom is made the promise of gracious assistance, upon their asking it, in order that they may be enabled to obey the will of God; and in no case are those to whom God issues his commands supposed in Scripture to be absolutely incapable of obedience, much less liable to be punished, without remedy, for not obeying, if

so incapacitated. This would, indeed, make the Divine Being a hard master, "reaping where he has not sown;" which is the language only of the "wicked servant;" and therefore to be abhorred by all good men. But if a point so obviously at variance with truth and equity be maintained, the doc-trine comes to this, that men are considered, in the Divine decree, as justly liable to eternal death, (their actual sins being foreseen,) because they have been placed by some previous decree, or higher branch of

the same decree, in circumstances which necessitate them to sin: a doc-trine which raises sublapsarianism into supralapsarianism itself. This is not the view which God gives us of his own justice; and it is contradicted by every notion of justice which has ever obtained among men: nor is it at all relieved by the subtlety of Zanchius and others, who distinguish between being necessitated to sin, and being forced to sin; and argue, that because in sinning the reprobate

follow the motions of their own will, they are justly punishable; though in this they fulfill the predestination of God.

The true question is, and it is not at all affected by such merely verbal distinctions, Can the reprobate do otherwise than sin, and could they ever do otherwise? They sin willingly, it is said.

This is granted; but could they ever will otherwise? The will is but one of many diseased powers of the soul. Is there, as to them, any cure for this disease of

the will? According to this scheme, there is not; and they will from necessity, as well as act from necessity; so that the difficulty, though thrown a step backward, remains in full force.

In support of their notion, that the penalty attached to original sin is eternal death, they allege, it is true, that the Apostle Paul represents all men under condemnation in consequence of their connection with the first Adam; and attributes the salvation of those who are

rescued from the ruin, only to the obedience of the second Adam. This is granted; but it will not avail to establish their position, that the human race being all under an absolute sentence of condemnation to eternal death, almighty God, in the exercise of his sovereign grace, elected a part of them to salvation, and left the remainder to the justice of their previous sentence.

For, 1. Supposing that the whole human race were under condemnation in their sense, this will not

account for the punishment of those who reject the Gospel. Their rejecting the Gospel is represented in Scripture as the sole cause of their condemnation, and never merely as an aggravating cause, as though they were under an irreversible previous sentence of death, and that this refusal of the Gospel only heightened a previously certain and inevitable punishment. An aggravated cause of condemnation it is; but for this reason, that it is the rejection of a remedy, and an abuse of mercy, neither

of which could have any place in a previously fixed condition of reprobation. If, therefore, it is true that "this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light," we must conclude, that the previous state of condemnation was not irremediable and unalterable, or this circumstance, the rejection "of the light," or revelation of mercy in the Gospel, could not be their condemnation.

2. Leaving the meaning of the apostle in Rom. 5, out of our consideration for a moment, the Scriptures never place the final condemnation of men upon the ground of Adam's offence, and their connection with him. actual sin forms the ground of every reproving charge; of every commination; and, beyond all doubt, of the condemnatory sentence at the day of judgment. To what ought we to refer, as explaining the true cause of the eternal punishment of any portion of our race, but to the proceedings of that

day, when that eternal punishment is to be awarded 1 Of the reason of this proceeding, of the facts to be charged, and of the sins to be punished, we have very copious information in the Scriptures; but these are evil works, and disbelief of the Gospel.

No-where is it said, or even hinted in the most distant manner, that men will be sentenced to eternal death) at that day, either because of Adam's sin or because their connection with Adam made them

inevitably corrupt in nature, and unholy in conduct; from which effects they could not escape, because God had from eternity resolved to deny them the grace necessary to this end.

3. The true view of the apostle's doctrine in Rom. 5, is to be ascertained, not by making partial extracts from his discourse; but by taking the argument entire, and in all its parts.

The Calvinists assume, that the apostle represents what the penal condition of the human race would have

been had not Christ interposed as our Redeemer. Here is one of their great and leading mistakes, for St. Paul does not touch this point. The Calvinist assumes, that, the whole race of men, but for the decree of election, would not only have come into actual being, but have been actually and individually punished for ever; and, on this assumption, endeavors to justify his doctrine of the arbitrary selection of a part of mankind to grace and salvation, the other being left in the state in which

they were found. Even this is contrary to other parts of their own system; for the reprobate are placed in an infinitely worse condition than had they been merely thus left with-out a share in Christ's redemption; because, even according to Calvinistic interpreters, their condemnation is fearfully aggravated; and by that which they have no means of avoiding, by actual sin and unbelief. But the assumption itself is wholly imaginary. For the apostle speak; not of what the human race would have been, that is, he affirms

nothing as to their penal condition, in case Christ had not undertaken the office of Redeemer; but he looks at their moral state and penal condition, as the case actually stands: in other words, he takes the state of man as it was actually established after the fall, as recorded in the book of Gene-sis. No child of Adam was actually born into the world until the promise of a Redeemer had been given, and the virtue of his anticipated redemption had begun to apply itself to the case of the fallen pair;

consequently, all mankind are born under a constitution of mercy, which actually existed before their birth. What the race would have been, had not the redeeming plan been brought in, the Scriptures nowhere tell us, except that a sentence of death to be executed "in the day" in which the first pair sinned, was the sanction of the law under which they were placed; and it is great presumption to assume it as a truth, that they would have multiplied their species only for eternal destruction. That

the race would have been propagated under an absolute necessity of sinning, and of being made eternally miserable, we may boldly affirm to be impossible; because it supposes an administration contradicted by every attribute which the Scriptures ascribe to God.

What the actual state of the human race is, in consequence both of the fall of Adam and of the interposition of Christ; of the imputation of the effects of the offence of the one, and of the obedience

of the other; is the only point to which our inquiries can go, and to which, indeed, the argument of the apostle is confined.

There is it is true, an imputation of the consequences of Adam's sin to his posterity, independent of their personal offences; but we can only ascertain what these consequences are by referring to the apostle him-self. One of these consequences is asserted explicitly, and others are necessarily implied in this

chapter and in other parts of his writings. That which is here explicitly asserted is, that death passed upon all men, though they have not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, that is, not personally; and therefore this death is to be regarded as the result of Adam's transgression alone, and of our having been so far "constituted sinners" in him, as to be liable to it. But then the death of which he here speaks, is the death of the body; for his argument, that "death reigned from Adam to

Moses," obliges us to understand him as speaking of the visible and known fact, that men in those ages died as to the body, since he could not intend to say that all the generations of men, from Adam to Moses, died eternally. The death of the body, then, is the first effect of the imputation of Adam's sin to his descendants, as stated in this chapter. A second is necessarily implied; a state of spiritual death, - the being born into the world with a corrupt nature, always tending to actual

offence. This is known to be the apostle's opinion, from other parts of his writings; but that passage in this chapter in which it is necessarily implied, is verse 16: "The free gift is of many offences unto justification." If men need justification of "many offences;" if all men need this, and that under a dispensation of help and spiritual healing; then the nature which universally leads to offences so numerous must be inherently and universally corrupt. A third consequence is a

conditional liability to eternal death; for that state which makes us liable to actual sin, makes us also liable to actual punishment. But this is conditional, not absolute; for since the apostle makes the obedience of Christ available to the forgiveness of the "many offences" we may commit in consequence of the corrupt nature we have derived from Adam, and extends this to all men, they can only perish by their own fault.

Now beyond these three effects we do not find that the apostle carries the consequence of Adam's sin. Of unpardoned "offences" eternal death is the consequence; but these are personal.

Of the sin of Adam, imputed, these are the consequences, - the death of the body, - and our introduction into the world with a nature tending to actual offences, and a conditional liability to punishment. But both are connected with a remedy as extensive as the disease.

For the first, the resurrection from the dead; for the other, the healing of grace and the promise of pardon, and thus though "condemnation" has passed upon "all men," yet the free gift unto justification of life passes upon "all men" also, - the same general terms being used by the apostle in each case. The effects of "the free gift" are not immediate; the reign of death remains till the resurrection; but

"in Christ shall all be made alive," and it is every man's own fault, not his fate, if

his resurrection be not a happy one. The corrupt nature remains till the healing is applied by the Spirit of God; but it is provided, and is actually applied in the case of all those dying in infancy, as we have already showed; (See chapter xviii, p. 3;) while justification and regeneration are offered, through specified means and conditions, to all who are of the age of reason and choice, and thus the sentence of eternal death may be reversed. What then becomes of the premises in the

sublapsarian theory which we have been examining, that in Adam all men are absolutely condemned to eternal death? Had Christ not undertaken human redemption, we have no proof, no indication in Scripture, that for Adam's sin any but the actually guilty pair would have been doomed to this condemnation; and though now the race having become actually existent, is for this sin, and for the demonstration of God's hatred of sin in general, involved, through a federal relation and by an

imputation of Adam's sin, in the effects above mentioned; yet a universal remedy is provided.

But we are not to be confined even to this view of the grace of God, when we speak of actual offences. Here the case is even strengthened. The redemption of Christ extends not merely to the removal of the evils laid upon us by the imputation of Adam's transgression; but to those which are the effects of our own personal choice-to the forgive-ness of "many offences," upon

our repentance and faith, however numerous and aggravated they may be;- to the bestowing of

"abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness;" - and not merely to the reversal of the sentence of death, but 'to our "reigning in life by Jesus Christ:" so that "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound; that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness, unto eternal life /" - which phrase, in the New Testament, does never mean less than the

glorification of the bodies and souls of believers in the kingdom of God, and in the presence and enjoyment of the eternal glory of Christ.

So utterly without foundation is the leading assumption in the sublapsarian scheme, that the decree of election and reprobation finds the human race in a state of common and absolute liability to personal eternal punishment; and that by making a sovereign selection of a part of mankind, God does no

injustice to the rest by passing them by. The word of God asserts no such doctrine as the absolute condemnation of the race to eternal death, merely for Adam's offence; and if it did, the merciful result of the obedience of Christ is declared to be not only as extensive as the evil, in respect of the number of persons so involved; but in "grace" to be more abounding.

Finally, this assumption falls short of the purpose for which it is made; because the mere

"passing by" of a part of the race, already, according to them, under eternal condemnation, and which they contend inflicts no injustice upon them, does not account for their additional and aggravated punishment for doing what they had never the natural or dispensed power of avoiding, - breaking God's holy laws, and rejecting his Gospel. Upon a close examination of the sublapsarian scheme, it will be found, therefore, to involve all the leading difficulties of the Calvinistic theory as it is

broadly exhibited by Calvin himself. In both cases reprobation is grounded on an act of mere will, resting on no reason: it respects not in either, as its primary cause, the demerit of the creature; and it punishes eternally without personal guilt, arising either from actual sin, or from the rejection of the Gospel. Both unite in making sin a necessary result of the circumstances in which God has placed a great part of mankind, which, by no effort of theirs, can be avoided; or, what is the same thing, which they

shall never be disposed to avoid; and how either of these schemes, in strict consequence, can escape the charge of making God the author of sin, which the synod of Dort acknowledges to be "blasphemy," is inconceivable. For how does it alter the case of the reprobate, whether the fall of Adam himself was necessitated, or whether he acted freely? They, at least, are necessitated to sin; they come into the world under a necessitating constitution, which is the result of an act to which

they gave no consent; and their case differs nothing, except in circumstances which do not alter its essential character, from that of beings immediately created by God with a nature necessarily producing sinful acts, and to counteract which there is no remedy:- a case which few have been bold enough to suppose.

The different views of the doctrine of predestination, as stated above, greatly agitated the Protestant world, from the time of Calvin to the sitting of the

celebrated synod of Dort, whose decisions on this point, having been received as a standard by several Churches and by many theologians, may next be properly introduced; although, after what has been said, they call only for brief remark.

"The Judgment of the synod of the Reformed Belgic Churches," to which many divines of note of other Reformed Churches were admitted, "on the articles controverted in the Belgic Churches," was drawn up in Latin, and

read in the great church at Dort, in the year 1619; and a translation into English of this "Judgment," with the synod's "Rejection of Errors," was published in the same year. (London, printed by John Bill) This translation having become scarce, or not being known to Mr. Scott, he published a new translation in 1818, from which, as being in more modern English, and, as far as I have compared it, unexceptionably faithful, I shall take the extracts necessary to exhibit the synod's decision on the point before us.

Art. 1. "As all men have sinned in Adam, and have become exposed to the curse and eternal death, God would have done no injustice to any one, if he had determined to leave the whole human race under sin and the curse, and to condemn them on account of sin; according to the words of the apostle,' all the world is become guilty before God,' Rom. 3:19. ' All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God,' Rom. 3:23 and ' the wages of sin is death,' Rom. 6:23."

The synod here assumes that all men, in consequence of Adam's sin, have become exposed to the curse of "eternal death;" and they quote passages to prove it, which manifestly prove nothing to the point. The two first speak of actual sin; the third, of the wages, or penalty of actual sin, as the context of each will show. The very texts adduced, show how totally at a loss the synod was for any thing like Scriptural evidence of this strange doctrine; which, however, as we have seen, would not, if true,

help them through their difficulties, seeing it leaves the punishment of the reprobate for actual sin and for disbelief of the Gospel, still unaccounted for on every principle of justice.

Art. 4. "They who believe not the Gospel, on them the wrath of God remaineth; but those who receive it, and embrace the Savior Jesus with a true and living faith, are, through him, delivered from the wrath of God, and receive the gift of everlasting life."

To this there is nothing to object; only it is to be observed, that those who are not elected to eternal life out of the common mass, are not, according to this article, merely left and passed by; but are brought under an obligation of believing the Gospel, which, nevertheless, is no "good news" to them, and in which they have no interest at all; and yet, in default of believing, "the wrath of God abideth upon them." Thus there is, in fact, no alternative for them. They cannot believe, or else it would follow that

those reprobated might be saved; and, therefore, the wrath of God "abideth upon them," for no fault of their own. This, however, the next article denies.

Art. 5. "The cause or fault of this unbelief, as also of all other sins, is by no means in God; but in man. But faith in Jesus Christ, and salvation by him, is the free gift of God. ' By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God,' Eph. 2:8. In like manner, ' it is given to you to believe in Christ. Phil. 1:29."

These passages would be singular proofs that the fault of unbelief is in men themselves, did not the next article explain the connection between them and the premises in the minds of the synodists. A much more appropriate text, but a rather difficult one on their theory, would have been, "ye have not, because ye ask not."

Art. 6. That some, in time, have faith given them by God, and others have it not given, proceeds from his eternal decree; for 'known unto God are all his works

from the beginning of the world,'

Acts 15:18. According to which decree, he gradually softens the hearts of the elect, however hard, and he bends them to believe; but the non-elect he leaves, in just judgment, to their own perversity and hardness. - And here, especially, a deep discrimination, at the same time both merciful and just; a discrimination of men equally lost, opens itself to us; or that decree of election and reprobation which is revealed in the word of God; which as

perverse, impure, and unstable persons do wrest to their own destruction, so it affords ineffable consolation to holy and pious souls."

To this article the synod appends no Scripture proofs; which if the doctrines it contains were, as the synodists say, "revealed in the word of God," would not have been wanting. The passage which stands in the middle of the article could scarcely be intended as a proof, since it would equally apply to any other doctrine which

does not shut out the prescience of God. The doctrine of the two articles just quoted, will be seen by taking them together. The position laid down is, that "the fault of not believing the Gospel is "in man" The alleged proof of this is, that faith is the gift of God. But this only proves that the fault of not believing is in man, just as it allows that God, the giver of faith, is willing to give faith to those who have it not, and that they will not receive it. In no other way can it prove the faultiness of man; for to what end are we taught

that faith is the gift of God in order to prove the fault of not believing to be in man, if God will not bestow the gift, and if man cannot believe without such bestowment? This, however, is precisely what the synod teaches. It argues, that faith is the gift of God; that it is only given to "some;" and that this proceeds from God's "eternal decree." So that, by virtue of this decree, he gives faith to some, and withholds it from others, who are, thereupon, left without the power of believing; and for this act

of God, therefore, and not for a fault of their own, they are punished eternally. And yet the synod calls this a "just judgment; affording ineffable consolation to holy souls," and a

"doctrine only rejected by the perverse and impure!"

As we have already quoted and commented on the 7th and 8th articles on election, we proceed to Art. 10. "Now the cause of this gratuitous election is the sole good pleasure of God; not consisting in this, that he elected into the

condition of salvation certain qualities or human actions, from all that were possible; but in that, out of the common multitude of sinners, he took to himself certain persons as his peculiar property, according to the Scripture, 'for the children being not born, neither having done any good or evil, &c, it is said (that is to Rebecca) the elder shall serve the younger; even as it is written, Jacob have I loved; but Esau have I hated,' Rom.

9:11-13. 'And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed,' Acts 13:48."

Thus the ground of this election is resolved wholly into the "good pleasure of God," (est solum Dei beneplacitum,) "having no respect, as to its Reason, or condition, though it may have as to its end, to any foreseen faith, obedience of faith, or any other good quality and disposition," as it is expressed in the preceding article. Let us, then, see how the case stands with the reprobate.

Art. 15. "Moreover, Holy Scripture doth illustrate and commend to us this eternal and free grace of our election, in this more especially, that it doth also testify all men not to be elected; but that some are non-elect, or passed by in the eternal election of God: whom, truly, God, from most free, just, irreprehensible, and immutable good pleasure, decreed to leave in the common misery into which they had, by their own fault, cast themselves, and not to bestow on them living faith, and the grace

of conversion; but having left them in their own ways, and under just judgment, at length, not only on account of their unbelief, but also of all their other sins, to condemn, and eternally punish them for the manifestation of his own justice. And this is the decree of reprobation which determines that God is in no wise the author of sin; (which, to be thought of, is blasphemy;) but a tremendous, irreprehensible, just Judge and avenger."

Thus we hear the synodists confessing, in the same breath in which they plausibly represent reprobation as a mere passing by and leaving men "in the common misery," that the reprobate are punishable for their "unbelief and other sins," and so this decree imports, therefore, much more than leaving men in the "common misery." For this "common misery" can mean no more than the misery common to all mankind by the sin of Adam, into which his fall plunged the elect, as well as

the reprobate; and to be "left" in it, must be understood of being left to the sole consequences of that offence. Now, were it even to be conceded that these consequences extend to personal and conscious eternal, punishment, which has been disproved; yet, even then, their decree has a much more" formidable aspect, terrible and repulsive as this alone would be, For we are expressly told, that God not only "decreed to leave them in this misery," but "not to bestow on them living faith, and the grace of

conversion;" and then to condemn, and eternally punish them, "on account of their unbelief," which by their own showing, these reprobates could not avoid; and for "all their other sins," which they could not but commit, since it was "decreed" to deny to them "the grace of conversion." Thus the case of the reprobate is deeply aggravated, beyond what it could have been if they had been merely "left in the common misery;" and the synod and its followers have, therefore, the task of showing, how the

punishing of men for what they never could avoid, and which, it was expressly decreed they never should avoid, "is a manifestation of the justice" of almighty God.

From the above extracts it will be seen how little reason Mr. Scott had to reprove Dr. Heylin with "bearing false witness against his neighbor," (Scott's Translation of the Articles of the Synod of Dort, p. 120,) on account of having given a summary of the eighteen articles of the synod, on predestination,

in the following words:- "That God, by an absolute decree, hath elected to salvation a very small number of men, without any regard to their faith and obedience whatsoever; and secluded from saving grace all the rest of mankind, and appointed them by the same decree to eternal damnation, without any regard to their infidelity and impenitency."

Whether Mr. Scott understood this controversy or not, Dr. Heylin shows, by this

summary, that he neither misapprehended it, nor bore "false witness against his neighbor," in so stating it; for as to the stir made about his rendering "multitudo" a very small number, this verbal inaccuracy affects not the merits of the doctrine; and neither the synodists, nor any of their followers, ever allowed the elect to be a very great number. The number, less or more, alters not the doctrine.

With respect to the elect, the synod confesses, that the decree of election has

no regard, as a cause, to faith and obedience foreseen in the persons so elected; and with respect to the reprobate, although it is not so explicit in asserting that the decree of reprobation has no regard to their infidelity and impenitency, the foregoing extracts cannot possibly be interpreted into any other meaning. For it is manifestly in vain for the synodists to attempt, in the 15th article, to gloss over the doctrine, by saying that men "cast themselves into the common misery by their own fault" when they

only mean that they were cast into it by Adam and by his fault. If they intended to ground their decree of reprobation on foresight of the personal offences of the reprobate, they would have said this in so many words; but the materials of which the synod was composed forbade such a declaration; and they themselves, in the "Rejection of Errors,"

appended to their chapter "De divina Praedestinatione," place in this list "the errors of those who teach that God has not decreed, from his own

mere just will to leave any in the fall of Adam, and in the common state of sin and damnation, or to pass them by in the communication of grace necessary to faith and conversion;" quoting as a proof of this dogma, "He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth," and giving no intimation that they understand this passage in any other sense than Calvin and his immediate followers have uniformly affixed to it. What Dr. Heylin has said is here, then, abundantly

established; for if the decree of reprobation is to be referred to God's "mere will," and if its operation is to leave the reprobate "in the fall of Adam" and "to pass them by in that communication of grace which is necessary to faith and conversion," the decree itself is that which prevents both penitence and faith, and stands upon some other ground than the personal infidelity and impenitency of the reprobate, and cannot have "any regard" to either, except as a part of its own dread consequences: a view

of the matter which the supralapsarians would readily admit. How their doctrine, so stated by themselves, could give the synod any reason to complain, as they do in their conclusion, that they were slandered by their enemies when they were charged with teaching, "that God, by the bare and mere determination of his will, without any respect of the sin of any man, predestinated and created the greatest part of the world to eternal damnation,"

will not be very obvious; or why they should startle at the same doctrine in one dress which they themselves have but clothed in another. The fact is, that the divisions in the synod obliged the leading members, who were chiefly stout supralapsarians, to qualify their doctrine somewhat in words, while substantially it remained the same; but what they lost by giving up a few words in one place, they secured by retaining them in another, or by resorting to subtitles not obvious to the commonalty. Of this

subtlety, the apparent disclaimer just quoted is in proof. When they seem to deny that God reprobates without any respect to the sin of any man, they may mean that he had respect to the sin of Adam, or to sin in Adam; for they do not deny that they reject personal sin as a ground of reprobation. Even when they appear to allow that God had, in reprobation, respect to the corruption of human nature, or even to personal transgression, they never confess that God had respect to sin, in either sense, as the impulsive or

meritorious cause of reprobation. But the greatest subtlety remains behind; for the synod says nothing, in this complaint and apparent rejection of the doctrine charged upon them by their adversaries, but what all the supralapsarian divines would say. - These, as we have seen, make a distinction between the two parts of the decree of reprobation, - preterition and predamnation, the latter of which must always have respect to actual sin; and hence arises their distinction between

"destruction" and "damnation" For they say, it is one thing to predestinate and create to damnation, and another to predestinate and create to destruction. Damnation, being the sentence of a judge, must be passed in consideration of sin; but destruction may be the act of a sovereign, and so inflicted by right of dominion. (8) The synod would have disallowed something substantial, had they denied that God created any man to destruction, without respect to sin, and were

safe enough in allowing that he has created none, without respect to sin, unto damnation.

But among the errors on predestination, which they formally "reject," and which they place under nine distinct heads, thus attempting to guard the pure and orthodox doctrine as to this point on the right hand and on the left, they are careful not to condemn the supralapsarian doctrine, or to place even its highest branches among the doctrines disavowed.

(8) "Non solent enim supralapsarii dicere Deum quosdam ad seternam damna-tionem creasse et praedestinasse; eo quod damnatio actum judicialem designet, ac proinde peccati rneritum praesupponat; sed malunt uti voce exitii, ad quod Deus, tanquam absolutus Dominus, jus habeat creandi et destinandi quoscunque volu-erit." (Curcellaeus De Jure Dei, &c, cap. x. Sec also Bishop womack's Calvin-istic Cabinet, &c, p. 394.)

The doctrine of the Church of Scotland, on these topics, is expressed in the answers to the 12th and 13th questions of its large catechism: "God's decrees are the wise, free, and holy acts of the counsel of his will; whereby, from all eternity, he hath, for his own glory, unchangeably foreordained whatsoever comes to pass in time, especially concerning angels and men" - "God, by an eternal and immutable decree, out of his mere love, for the praise of his glorious grace to be manifested in due time,

hath elected some angels to glory; and, in Christ, hath chosen some men to eternal life and the means thereof; and also, according to his sovereign power and the unsearchable counsel of his own will, (whereby he extendeth or withholdeth favor as he pleaseth,) hath passed by and foreordained the rest to dishonor and wrath, to be for their sin inflicted, to the praise of the glory of his justice."

In this general view there appears a strict conformity

to the opinions of Calvin, as before given.

All things are the subjects of decree and pre-ordination; election and reprobation are grounded upon the mere will of God; election is the choosing men, not only to salvation, but to the means of salvation; from which the reprobates are therefore excluded, as passed by, and foreordained to wrath; and yet though the "means of salvation" are never put within their reach, this wrath is inflicted upon them "for their sin;" and to

the praise of God's justice! The Church of Scotland adopts, also, the notion that decrees of election and reprobation extend to angels as well as men; a pretty certain proof that the framers of this catechism were not sublapsarians, for as to angels, there could be no election out of a "common misery;" and with Calvin, there-fore, they choose to refer the whole to the arbitrary pleasure and will of God. - "The angels who stood in their integrity, Paul calls elect; if their constancy rested on the

Divine pleasure, the defection of others argues their having been forsaken: (direlectos,) a fact, for which no other cause can be assigned, than the reprobation hidden in the secret counsel of God."

The ancient Church of the Vaudois, in the valleys of Piedmont, have a confession of faith, bearing date A. D. 1120; and which, probably, transmits the opinions of much more ancient times. The only article which bears upon the extent of the death of Christ is drawn up, as

might be expected in an age of the Church when it was received, as a matter almost entirely undisputed, that Christ died for the salvation of the whole world. Art. 8. "Christ is our life, truth, peace, and righteousness; also our pastor, advocate, sacrifice, and priest, who died for the salvation of all those that believe, and is risen again for our justification."

The Confession of Faith, published by the Churches of Piedmont in 1655, bears a different character. In the year 1630, a plague which

was introduced from France into these valleys, swept off all the ministers but two, and with them ended the race of their ancient harbes, or pastors.

(See "Historical Defence, &c, of the Waldenses" by Sim's.) The Vaudois were then under the necessity of applying to the reformed Churches of France and Geneva for a supply of ministers; and with them came in the doctrine of Calvin in an authorized form. It was thus embodied in the Confession of 1655. Art. 11. "God saves from

corruption and condemnation those whom he has chosen from the foundation of the world, not for any disposition, faith, or holiness, that he foresaw in them, but of his mere mercy in Jesus Christ his Son: passing by all the rest, according to the irreprehensible reason of his free will and justice." The last clause is expressed in the very words of Calvin.

The 12th article in the Confession of the French Churches, 1558, is, in substance, Calvinistic, though brief and guarded

in expression. "We believe, that out of this general corruption and condemnation in which all men are plunged, God doth deliver them whom he hath, in his eternal and unchangeable counsel, chosen of his mere goodness and mercy, through our Lord Jesus Christ, without any consideration of their works, leaving the rest in their sins, and damnable estate, that he may show forth in them his justice, as, in the elect, he doth most illustriously declare the riches of his mercy. For

one is not better than another, until such time as God doth make the difference, according to his unchangeable purpose which he hath determined in Jesus Christ before the creation of the world." (Quick's "Synodicon in Gallia Reformata") This confession was drawn up by Calvin himself, though not in language so strong as he usually employs; which, perhaps, indicates that the majority of the French pastors were inclined to the sublapsarian theory, and did not, in every point,

coincide with their great master.

The Westminster Confession gives the sentiments both of the English Presbyterian Churches, and the Church of Scotland. (9) Chapter iii treats of the predestination.

(9) The title of it is, "The Confession of Faith agreed upon by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, with the assistance of Commissioners from the Church of Scotland." The date of the ordinance for convening this assembly is

1643. The Confession was approved by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1647

"By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death. These angels and men thus predestinated and foreordained, are particularly, and unchangeably designed; and their number is so certain and definite, that it cannot either be increased

or diminished. Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to his eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of his will, hath chosen in Christ unto everlasting glory, out of his mere free grace and love, without any foresight of faith and good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature as conditions or causes moving him thereunto; and all to the praise of his glorious grace.

As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath he, by the eternal and most free purpose of his will, foreordained all the means thereunto. Wherefore, they who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ; are effectually called unto faith in Christ, by his Spirit working in due season; are justified, adopted, sanctified, and kept by his power, through faith unto salvation; neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the elect only.

The rest of mankind God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of his own will, whereby he extendeth or withholdeth mercy as he pleaseth, for the glory of his sovereign power over his creatures, to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sin, to the praise of his glorious justice."

Here we have no attempts at qualification after the example of the synod of Dort; but the whole is conformed to the higher and most unmitigated

parts of the Institutes of Calvin. By the side of the Presbyterian Confession, the seventeenth article of the Church of England must appear exceedingly moderate; and, as to Calvinistic predestination, to say the least, equivocal. It never gave satisfaction to the followers of Calvin, who had put his stronger impress upon the Augustinism which floated in the minds of many of the divines of the reformation, who generally, as appears from the earliest Protestant confessions and catechisms, (1) thought fit

to recommend that either these points should not be touched at all, or so speak of them as to admit great latitude of interpretation, and that, probably, in charitable respect to the varying opinions of the theologians and Churches of the day. It is of the perfected form of Calvinism that Arminius speaks, when he says, "It neither agrees nor corresponds with the harmony of those confessions which were published together in one volume at Geneva, in the name of the reformed and

Protestant Churches. If that harmony of confessions be faithfully consulted, it will appear, that many of them do not speak in the same manner concerning predestination; that some of them only incidentally mention it, and that they evidently never once touch upon those heads of the doctrine which are now in great repute, and particularly urged in the preceding scheme of predestination. The confessions of Bohemia, England, and Wirtemburg, and the first Helvetian Confession, and

that of the four cities of Strasburgh, Constance, Memmingen, and Lindau, make no mention of this predestination: those of Basle and Saxony only take a very cursory notice of it in three words. The Augustan Confession speaks of it in such a manner as to induce the Genevan editors to think that some annotation was necessary on their part to give us a previous warning.

The last of the Helvetian Confessions, to which a great portion of the reformed Churches have

expressed their assent, likewise speaks of it in such a strain as makes me very desirous to see what method can possibly be adopted to give it any accordance with that doctrine of the predestination which I have stated. With, out the least contention or caviling it may be very properly made a subject of doubt, whether this doctrine agrees with the Belgic Confession and the Heidelberg Catechism." (Nichol's Works of Arminius, vol. i, p. 557.) (1) The Augsburg Confession

says, "Non est hic opus disputationibus de praedestinatione et similibus. Nam promissio est universalis et nihil detrahit operibus, sed exsuscitat ad fidem et vere bona opera." - Act 20. And the Saxon Confession is equally indifferent to the subject. "Non addimus hic quaestiones de praedestinatione seu de electione; sed deducimus omnes lectores ad verbum Dei, et jubemus ut voluntatem Dei verbo ipsius discant sicut AEternus Pater expressa voce praecipit, hunc

audite." (Art. de Remiss, Pecc.)

I have given these extracts to show that nothing in the preceding discussion has been assumed as Calvinism, but what is to be found in the writings of the founder of the system, and in the confessions and creeds of Churches which professedly admitted his doctrine.

With respect to modifications of this system, the sublapsarian theory has been already considered and shown to be substantially the same

as the system which it professes to mitigate and improve.

We may now adduce another modified theory; but shall, upon examination, find it but little, if at all, removed out of the reach of those objections which have been stated to the various shades of the predestinating scheme already noticed.

That scheme is in England usually called Baxterianism, from the celebrated baxter, who advocated it in his Treatise of Universal Redemption,

and in his Methodus Theologia. He was, however, in this theory but the disciple of certain divines of the French Protestant Church, whose opinions created many dissensions abroad, and produced so much warmth of opposition from the Calvinistic party, that they were obliged first to engage in the hopeless attempt of softening down the harsher aspects of the doctrine of Calvin and the synod of Dort, in order to keep themselves in countenance; then to attack the Arminians with asperity, in

order to purge themselves of the suspicion of entire hetero- doxy in a Calvinistic Church; and, finally, to withdraw from the con-test. The Calvinism of the Church of France was, however, much mitigated in subsequent times by the influence of the writings of these theologians; a result which also has followed in England from the labors of Baxter, who, though he formed no separate school, has had numerous followers in the Calvinistic Churches of this country. The real author of the

scheme, at least, in a systematized form, was camero, who taught divinity at Saumur, and it was unfolded and defended by his disciple Amyraldus, to whom Curcellseus replied in the work from which I have above made some quotations. Baxter says, in his preface to his Saints' Rest, "The middle way which Camero, Crocius, Martinius, Amyraldus, Davenant, with all the divines of Britain and Bremen, in the synod of Dort go, I think is nearest the truth of any that I know who have

written on these points." (2) This system he labored powerfully to defend, and his works on this subject, although his system is often spoken of, being but little known to the general reader, the following exhibition of this scheme, from his work entitled

"Universal Redemption," may be acceptable. It makes great concessions to that view of the Scriptural doctrine which we have attempted to establish; but, for want of going another step, it is, perhaps, the most inconsistent theory to

which the varied attempts to modify Calvinism have given rise. Baxter first differs from the majority of Calvinists, though not from all, in his statement of the doctrine of satisfaction.

(2) Of Camero, or Cameron, Amyraldus, Curcellaeus, and the controversy in which they were engaged, see an interesting account in Nichol's Arminianism and Calvinism Compared, vol i, appendix c; a work of elaborate research, and abounding with the most curious information as to

the opinions and history of those times.

"Christ's sufferings were not a fulfilling of the law's threatening, (though he bore its curse materially;) but a satisfaction for our not fulfilling the precept, and to prevent God's fulfilling the threatening on us."

"Christ paid not, therefore, the idem, but the tantundem, or aequivalens; not the very debt which we owed and the law required, but the value; (else it were not strictly satisfaction, which is

redditio aequivalen-tis:) and (it being improperly called the paying of a debt, but properly a suffering for the guilty) the idem is nothing but supplicium delinquentis. In criminals, dum alius solvet simul aliud solvitur. The law knoweth no vicarius paenae; though the law maker may admit it, as he is above law; else there were no place for pardon, if the proper debt be paid and the law not relaxed but fulfilled."

"Christ did neither obey nor suffer in any man's

stead, by a strict, pro-per representation of his person in point of law; so as that the law should take it as done or suffered by the party himself.

But only as a third person as a mediator, he voluntarily bore what else the sinner should have borne."

"To assert the contrary (especially as to particular persons considered in actual sin) is to overthrow all Scripture theology, and to introduce all Antinomianism; to overthrow all possibility of pardon, and assert justification before we sinned or were born, and to make ourselves to have satisfied God.

"Therefore we must not say that Christ died nostro loco, so as to per-sonate us, or represent our persons in law sense; but only to bear what else we must have borne." (Universal Redemption, pp. 48-51.)

This system explicitly asserts, that Christ made a satisfaction by his death equally for the sins of every man; and thus Baxter essentially differs both from the rigid Calvinists, and also from the sublapsarians, who, though they may allow that the reprobate derive some

benefits from Christ's death, so that there is a vague sense in which he may be said to have died for all men, yet they, of course, deny to such the benefit of Christ's satisfaction or atonement which Baxter contends for.

"Neither the law, whose curse Christ bore, nor God, as the legislator to be satisfied, did distinguish between men as elect and reprobate, or as believers and unbelievers, de presenti vel de futuro; and to impose upon Christ, or require from him

satisfaction for the sins of one sort more than of another, but for mankind in general.

"God the Father, and Christ the Mediator, now dealeth with no man upon the mere rigorous terms of the first law; (obey perfectly and live, else thou shalt die;) but giveth to all much mercy, which, according to the tenor of that violated law, they could not receive, and calleth them to repentance, in order to their receiving farther mercy offered them. And accordingly he will not

judge any at last according to the mere law of works, but as they have obeyed or not obeyed his conditions or terms of grace.

"It was not the sins of the elect only, but of all mankind fallen, which lay upon Christ satisfying.

And to assert the contrary, injuriously diminisheth the honor of his sufferings; and hath other desperate ill consequences." (Universal Redemption, pp. 86, 37, and 50.) The benefits derived to all men equally, from the satisfaction of Christ, he thus states, -

"All mankind immediately upon Christ's satisfaction, are redeemed and delivered from that legal necessity of perishing which they were under, (not by remitting sin or punishment directly to them, but by giving up God's jus puniendi into the hands of the Redeemer; nor by giving any right directly to them, but per meram resultantiam this happy change is made for them in their relation, upon the said remitting of God's right and advantage of justice against them,) and they are given up to

the Redeemer as their owner and ruler, to be dealt with upon terms of mercy which have a tendency to their recovery.

"God the Father and Christ the Mediator hath freely, without any prerequisite condition on man's part, enacted a law of grace of universal extent, in regard of its tenor, by which he giveth, as a deed of gift, Christ himself, with all his following benefits which he bestoweth; (as benefactor and legislator;) and this to all alike, without excluding any; upon condition they

believe, and accept the offer.

"By this law, testament, or covenant, all men are conditionally pardoned, justified, and reconciled to God already, and no man absolutely; nor doth it make a difference, nor take notice of any till men's performance or non-performance of the condition makes a difference.

"In the new law Christ hath truly given himself with a conditional pardon, justification, and conditional right to

salvation, to all men in the world, without exception? (Universal Redemption, p. 36, &c.)

On the case of the heathen:-

"Though God hath been pleased less clearly to acquaint us on what terms he dealeth with those that hear not of Christ, yet it being most clear and certain, that he dealeth with them on terms of general grace, and not on the terms of the rigorous law of works; this may evince them to be the

Mediator's subjects, and redeemed.

"Though it be very difficult, and not very necessary, to know what is the condition prescribed to them that hear not of Christ, or on what terms Christ will judge them; yet, to me it seems to be the covenant made with Adam, Gen. 3:15, which they are under, requiring their taking God to be their only God and Redeemer, and to expecting mercy from him and loving him above all, as their end and chief good; and repenting of sin, and

sincere obedience, according to the laws promulgated to them, to lead them farther.

"All those that have not heard of Christ, have yet much mercy which they receive from him, and is the fruit of his death: according to the well or ill using whereof it seems possible that God will judge them.

"It is a course to blind, and not to inform men, to lay the main stress in the doctrine of redemption upon our uncertain conclusions of God's

dealing with such as never heard of Christ, seeing all proof is per notiora; and we must reduce points uncertain to the certain, and not the certain to the uncertain, in our trial." (Universal Redemption, pp. 37, 38, and 54.) In arguments drawn from the consequences which follow the denial of "universal satisfaction,"

Baxter is particularly terse and conclusive.

"The doctrine which denieth universal satisfaction hath all these inconveniences and absurd

consequents following: therefore it is not of God, nor true.

"It either denieth the universal promise or conditional gift of pardon and life to all men if they will believe, and then it overturneth the substance of Christ's law and Gospel promise; or else it maketh God to give conditionally to all men a pardon and salvation which Christ never purchased, and without his dying for men.

"It maketh God either not to offer the effects of Christ's satisfaction

(pardon and life) to all, but only to the elect; or else to offer that which is not, and which he cannot give.

"It denieth the direct object of faith, and of God's offer, that is Christ-tum qui satisfecit, (a Christ that hath satisfied.)

"It either denieth the non-elect's deliverance from that flat necessity of perishing, which came on man for sinning against the first law, by its remediless, unsuspended obligation; (and so neither Christ, Gospel, or mercy, had ever any nature of a remedy to

them, nor any more done toward their deliverance than toward the deliverance of the devils;) or else it maketh this deliverance and remedy to be without satisfaction by Christ for them.

"It either denieth that God commandeth all to believe, (but only the elect;) or else maketh God to assign them a deceiving object for their faith, commanding them to believe in that which never was, and to trust in that which would deceive them if they did trust it.

"It maketh God either to have appointed and commanded the non-elect to use no means at all for their recovery and salvation, or else to have appointed them means which are all utterly useless and insufficient, for want of a prerequisite cause without them; yea, which imply a contradiction.

"It maketh the true and righteous God to make promises of pardon and salvation to all men on condition of believing, which he neither would nor could perform, (for want of

such satisfaction to his justice,) if they did believe.

"It denieth the true sufficiency of Christ's death for the pardoning and saving of all men, if they did believe.

"It makes the cause of men's damnation to be principally for want of an expiatory sacrifice and of a Savior, and not of believing.

"It leaveth all the world, elect as well as others, without any ground and object for the first justifying faith, and in an

utter uncertainty whether they may believe to justification or not.

"It denieth the most necessary humbling aggravation of men's sins, so that neither the minister can tell wicked men that they have sinned against him that bought them, nor can any wicked man so accuse himself; no, nor any man that doth not know himself to be elect: they cannot say, my sins put Christ to death, and were the cause of his sufferings: nay, a minister cannot tell any man in the world,

certainly, (their sins put Christ to death,) because he is not certain who is elect or sincere in the faith.

"It subverteth Christ's new dominion and government of the world, and his general legislation and judgment according to his law, which is now founded in his title of redemption, as the first dominion and government was on the title of creation.

"It maketh all the benefits that the non-elect receive, whether spiritual or corporal; and so even the relaxation of the curse of

the law, (without which relaxation no man could have such mercies,) to befall men without the satisfaction of Christ; and so either make satisfaction, as to all those mercies, needless, or else must find another satisfier.

"It maketh the law of grace to contain far harder terms than the law of works did in its utmost rigor.

"It maketh the law of Moses either to bind all the non-elect still to all ceremonies and bondage ordinances, (and so sets up Judaism,) or else to be

abrogated and taken down, and men delivered from it, with-out Christ's suffering for them.

"It destroys almost the whole work of the ministry, disabling ministers either to humble men by the chiefest aggravations of their sins, and to convince them of ingratitude and unkind dealing with Christ, or to show them any hopes to draw them to repentance, or any love and mercy tending to salvation to melt and win them to the love of Christ; or any sufficient object for their

faith and affiance, or any means to be used for pardon or salvation, or any promise to encourage them to come in, or any threatening to deter them.

"It makes God and the Redeemer to have done no more for the remedying of the misery of most of fallen mankind than for the devils, nor to have put them into any more possibility of pardon or salvation.

"Nay, it makes God to have dealt far hardlier with most men than with the devils; making them a law which

requireth their believing in one that never died for them, and taking him for their Redeemer that never redeemed them, and that on the mere foresight that they would not believe it, or decree that they should not; and so to create by that law a necessity of their far sorer punishment, without procuring them any possibility of avoiding it.

"It makes the Gospel of its own nature to be the greatest plague and judgment to most of men that receive it, that ever

God sendeth to men on earth, by binding them over to a greater punishment, and aggravating their sin, without giving them any possibility of remedy.

"It maketh the case of all the world, except the elect, as deplorate, remediless, and hopeless, as the case of the damned, and so denieth them to have any day of grace, visitation, or salvation, or any price for happiness put into their hands.

"It maketh Christ to condemn men to hell fire

for not receiving him for their Redeemer that never redeemed them, and for not resting on him for salvation by his blood, which was never shed for them, and for not repenting unto life, when they had no hope of mercy, and faith and repentance could not have saved them. "It putteth sufficient excuses into the mouths of the condemned.

"It maketh the torments of conscience in hell to be none at all, and teacheth the damned to put away all

their sorrows and self accusations.

"It denieth all the privative part of those torments which men are obliged to suffer by the obligation of Christ's law, and so maketh hell either no hell at all, or next to none.

"And I shall anon show how it leads to infidelity and other sins, and, after this, what face of religion is left unsubverted? Not that I charge those that deny universal satisfaction with holding all these abominations; but their doctrine of introducing

them by necessary consequence: it is the opinion and not the men that I accuse."

A thorough Arminian could say nothing stronger than what is asserted in several of the above quotations; and, perhaps, what might not be borne from him, may call attention from Baxter, and happy would it be if every advocate of Calvin's reprobation would give these "consequents," a candid consideration.

The peculiarity of Baxter's scheme will be seen from the following farther

extracts; and, after all, it singularly leaves itself open to almost all the objections which he so powerfully urges against Calvinism itself.

"Though Christ died equally for all men, in the aforesaid law sense, as he satisfied the offended legislator, and as giving himself to all alike in the conditional covenant; yet he never properly intended or purposed THE ACTUAL JUSTIFYING AND SAVING OF ALL, nor of ANY but those that come to be justified and saved: he

did not, therefore, die for all, nor for any that perish, with a decree or resolution to save them, MUCH LESS DID HE DIE FOR ALL ALIKE, AS TO

THIS INTENT.

"Christ hath given faith to none by his law or testament, though he hath revealed, that to some he will, as benefactor and dominus absolutus, give that grace which shall infallibly produce it; and God hath given some to Christ that he might prevail with them accordingly; yet this is no giving it to the

person, nor hath he in himself ever the more title to it, nor can any lay claim to it as their due.

"It belongeth not to Christ as satisfer, nor yet as legislator, to make wicked refusers to become willing, and receive him and the benefits which he offers; therefore he may do all for them that is fore-expressed, though he cure not their unbelief.

"Faith is a fruit of the death of Christ, (and so is all the good which we do enjoy,) but not directly, as it is satisfaction to justice; but

only remotely, as it proceedeth from that JUS dominii which Christ has received to send the Spirit in what measure and to whom he will, and to succeed it accordingly; and as it is necessary to the attainment of the farther ends of his death in the certain gathering and saving of the elect," (Universal Redemption, p. 63, &c.) Thus, then, the whole theory comes to this, that, although a conditional salvation has been purchased by Christ for all men, and is offered to them, and all legal

difficulties are removed out of the way of their pardon as sinners by the atonement, yet Christ hath not purchased for any man the gift of faith, or the power of performing the condition of salvation required; but gives this to some, and does not give it to others, by virtue of that absolute dominion over men which he has purchased for himself; so that, in fact, the old scheme of election and reprobation, still comes in, only with this difference, that the Calvinists refer that decree to the

sovereignty of the Father, Baxter to the sovereignty of the Son; one makes the decree of reprobation to issue from the Creator and Judge; the other, (which is indeed the more repulsive view,) from the Redeemer himself, who has purchased even those to whom he denies the gift of faith with his own most precious blood. This is plain from the following quotation:-

"God did not give Christ faith for his blood shed in exchange; the thing that God was to give the Son for

his satisfaction, was dominion and rule of the redeemed creature, and power therein to use what means he saw fit for the bringing in of souls to himself, even to send forth so much of his word and Spirit as he pleased; both the Father and Son resolving, from eternity, to prevail infallibly with all the elect; but never did Christ desire at his Father's hands that all whom he satisfied for, should be infallibly and irresistibly brought to believe, nor did God ever grant or promise any such thing. Jesus

Christ, as a ransom, died for all, and as Rector per leges, or legislator, he hath conveyed the fruits of his death to all, that is, those fruits which it appertained to him as legislator, to convey, which is right to what his new law or covenant doth promise; but those mercies which he gives as Dominus absolutus, arbitrarily beside or above his engagement, he neither gives nor ever intended to give to all that he died for." (Universal Redemption, p. 425.)

The only quibble which prevents the real aspect of this scheme from being at first seen, is, that Baxter, and the divines of this school, give to the elect irresistible effectual grace; but contend, that others have sufficient grace. This kind of grace is called, aptly enough, by Baxter himself,

"sufficient ineffectual grace;" and that it is worthy the appellation, his own account of it will show.

"I say it again, confidently, all men that perish (who have the use of reason) do perish directly, for

rejecting sufficient recovering grace. By grace, I mean mercy contrary to merit: by recovering, I mean such as tendeth in its own nature toward their recovery, and leadeth or helpeth them thereto. By sufficient, I mean, not sufficient directly to save THEM; (for such none of the elect have till they are saved;) nor yet sufficient to give them faith or cause them savingly to believe. But it is sufficient to bring them nearer Christ than they are, though not to put them into immediate possession of Christ by

union with him, as faith would do. It is an easy truth, that all men naturally are far from Christ, and that some, by custom in sinning, for want of informing and restraining means, are much farther from him than others, (as the heathens are,) and that it is not God's usual way (nor to be expected) to bring these men to Christ at once, by one act, or without any preparation, or first bringing them nearer to him. It is a similitude used by some that oppose what I now say; suppose a man in

a lower room should go no more steps than he in the middle room, he must go many steps before he came to be as near you as the other is. Now, suppose you offer to take them by the hand when they come to the upper stairs, and give them some other sufficient help to come up the lower steps: if these men will not use the help given them to ascend the first steps, (though entreated,) who can be blamed but themselves if they came not to the top? It is not your fault but theirs, that they have not your hand to lift

them up at the last step. So is our present case. Worldlings, and sensual ignorant sinners, have many steps to ascend before they come to justifying faith; and heathens have many steps before they come as far as ungodly Christians, (as might easily be manifested by enumeration of several necessary particulars.) Now, if these will not use that sufficient help that Christ gives them to come the first, or second, or third step, whose fault is it that they have not faith?"

(Universal Redemption, p. 434.)

But we have no reason to conclude, from this system, that if they took the steps required, it would bring them "nearer to Christ than they are," or, at least, bring them up to saving faith, which is the great point, since Mr. Baxter's own doctrine is, that Christ "never properly intended or purposed the actual justifying, and saving of all, and did not, therefore, die for all, nor for any that perish, with a design or resolution to save them,

much less did he die for all, as to this intent." Those, then, for whom Christ died, not with intent to give saving faith, cannot be saved; yet we are told that to these sufficient grace is given, to take a step or two which would bring them "nearer to Christ," Suppose such persons, then, to take these steps, yet, as Christ died not for them, with intent to give them saving faith, without this intent they cannot have saving faith, since it is not a part of Christ's purchase, but his arbitrary gift. The truth then is, that their salvation

is as impossible as that of the reprobates under the supralapsarian scheme, and the reason of their doom is no act of their own, but an act of Christ him-self, who, as "absolute Lord," denies that to them which is necessary to their salvation.

It is, however, but fair that Mr. Baxter should himself answer this objection.

"Objection, - Then, they that come not the first step are excusable; for, if they had come to the step next believing, they had no assurance that Christ

would have given them faith.

"Answer. - No such matter: for though they had no assurance, they had both God's command to seek more grace, and sufficient encouragement thereto; they had such as Mr. Cotton calls half promises, that is, a discovery of a possibility, and high degree of probability of obtaining; as Peter to Simon, pray, if perhaps the thoughts of thy heart may be forgiven. They may think God will not appoint men vain means, and he hath

appointed some means to all men to get more grace, and bring them nearer Christ than they are. Yea, no man can name that man since the world was made, that did his best in the use of these means, and lost his labor. So that if all men have not faith it is their own fault; not only as originally sinners, but as rejecting sufficient grace to have brought them nearer Christ than they were; for which it is that they justly perish, as is more fully opened in the dispute of sufficient grace."

One argument from Scripture demolishes this whole scheme. Mr. Baxter makes the condemnation of men to rest upon their not coming "nearer to Christ" than they are in their natural state; but the Scripture places their guilt in not fully "coming to him;" or, in other words, in their not believing in Christ "to salvation," since it has made faith their duty, and has connected salvation with faith. That they must take previous steps, such as consideration and repentance, is true, and that they are guilty for not

taking them; but then their guilt arises from their rejection of a strength and grace to consider and repent which is imparted to them, in order to lead them, through this process, to saving faith itself; and they are condemned for not having this faith, because not only the preparatory steps, but the faith itself is put within their reach, or they could not be condemned for unbelief. If Baxter really meant that any steps these non-elect persons could take, would actually put them into possession of saving faith,

he would have said so in so many plain words, and then between him and the Armmians there would have been no difference, so far as they who perish are concerned. But coming nearer to Christ, and nearer to saving faith are with him quite distinct. His concern was not to show how the non-elect might be saved, but how they might with some plausibility be damned.

"What then," says Dr. Womack, "is the universal redemption you or they speak of? Doth it consist in

the oblation of the curse or pain, the impetration of grace and righteousness, and the collation of life and glory? Man's misery consists but of two parts, sin and punishment, Doth your universal redemption make sufficient provision to free the non-elect from both, or from either of these? From the wrath to come, the damnation of hell, or from iniquity and their twin conversation? Indeed, in your assize sermons, you did very seasonably preach up Christ to be a Lord Chief Justice, to judge the

reprobate; but I cannot find that ever you declare him to be their Lord Keeper, or their Lord Treasurer, to communicate his saving grace for their conversion, or to secure them against the assaults and rage of their ghostly enemy. These last offices you suppose him to bear in favor of the elect only, so that your universal redemption holds a very fair correspondence with your sufficient grace, (as to the non-elect,)-there is not one single person sanctified by this, or saved by that" (Calvinistic

Cabinet Unlocked.) The remark of Curcellseus on the same system, as delivered by Amyraldus, is conclusive.

"Beside, since faith is necessary, in order to make us partakers of the benefits which are procured by the death of Christ, and since no one can obtain it by his natural powers, (for it is imparted through a special gift, from which God, by an absolute decree, has excluded the greatest portion of mankind,) of what avail is it that Christ has died for those to whom

faith is denied? Does not the affair revert to the same point, as if he had never entertained an intention of redeeming them?" (DeJure Dei Creaturas, &c.)

This cannot consistently be denied. Mr. Baxter, indeed, says, that "none can name the man since the world was made, that did his best in the use of the means to obtain more grace, and lost his labor." So we believe, but this helps not Mr. Baxter. One of his main principles is, that there is a class of men to whom Christ has resolved to give

saving faith; to the rest he has resolved not to give it. The man, then, who seeks more than common grace, and obtains saving grace, is either in the class to whom Christ has resolved, by right of dominion, to give saving grace, or he is not. If the former, then he is one of the elect, and so the instance given proves nothing as to the case of the non-elect; but, if he be of the latter class, then one of those to whom Christ never resolved to give saving grace, by some means obtains it, - how, it will be difficult to say. In

fact, it was never allowed by Mr. Baxter, or his followers, that any but the elect would be saved.

The remarks of a Calvinist upon the "middle scheme" of the French divines, the same in substance as that which was afterward advocated by Baxter, may properly close our remarks.

"This mitigated view of the doctrine of predestination has only one defect; but it is a capital one.

It represents God as desiring a thing (that is, salvation and happiness)

for all, which, in order to its attainment, requires a degree of his assistance and succor, which he refuseth to many. This rendered grace and redemption universal only in words, but partial in reality; and, therefore, did not at all mend the matter. The supralapsarians were consistent with themselves; but their doctrine was harsh and terrible, and was founded on the most unworthy notions of the Supreme Being; and, on the other hand, the sys-tem of Amyraut was full of inconsistencies: nay, even

the sublapsarian doctrine has its difficulties, and rather palliates than removes the horrors of supralapsarianism. What, then, is to be done? From what quarter shall the candid and well-disposed Christian receive that solid satisfaction and wise direction which neither of these systems is adapted to administer? These he will receive by turning his dazzled and feeble eye from the secret decrees of God, which were neither designed to be rules of action, nor sources of comfort to mortals here

below; and, by fixing his view upon the mercy of God, as it is manifested through Christ, the pure laws and sublime promises of his Gospel, and the equity of his present government and future tribunal." (Maclaine's Notes on Mosheim's History.) The theory, to which the name of Baxter has given some weight in this country, has been introduced more at length, because with it stands or falls every system of moderated or modified Calvinism, which by more modern writers has been

advocated. The scheme of Dr. Williams, of Rotherham) is little beside the old theory of supralapsarian reprobation, in its twofold enunciation of preterition, by which God refuses help to a creature which cannot stand without help, and his consequent damnation for the crimes committed in consequence of this withholding of supernatural aid. The dress is altered, and the system has a dash of Cameronism, but it is in substance the same. All other mitigated schemes rest on two

principles, the sufficiency of the atonement for all mankind, and the sufficiency of grace to those who believe not. For the first, it is enough to say, that the synod of Dort and the higher Calvinistic school will agree with them upon this point, and so nothing is gained; for the second, that the sufficiency of grace in these schemes is always understood in Baxter's sense, and is mere verbiage. It is not "the grace of God which bringeth SALVATION;" for no man is actually saved

without something more than this

"sufficient grace" provides. That which is contended for, is, in fact, not a sufficiency of grace in order to salvation; but, in order to justify the condemnation which inevitably follows. For this alone the struggle is made, but without success. The main characteristic of all these theories, from the first to the last, from the highest to the lowest is, that a part of mankind are shut out from the mercies of God, on some ground irrespective

of their refusal of a sincere offer to them of salvation through Christ, made with a communicated power of embracing it. Some power they allow to the reprobate, as natural power, and degrees of superadded moral power; but in no case the power to believe unto salvation; and thus, as one well observes, "when they have cut some fair trenches, as if they would bring the water of life unto the dwellings of the reprobate, on a sudden they open a sluice which carries it off again." The whole labor of these

theories is to find out some decent pretext for the infliction of punishment on them that perish, independent of the only reason given by Scripture, their rejection of a mercy free for all.

Having exhibited the Calvinistic system on its own authorities, it may be naturally asked from what mode or bias of thinking a scheme could arise so much at variance with the Scriptures, and with all received notions of just and benevolent administration among men; properties of

government which must be found more perfectly in the government of God, by reason of the perfection of its author, than in any other. That it had its source in a course of induction from the sacred Scriptures, though erroneous, is not probable; for, if it had been left to that test, it is pretty certain it would not have maintained itself. It appears rather to have arisen from metaphysical hypotheses and school subtitles, to which the sense of Scripture has been accommodated, often very violently; and by subtitles

of this kind, it has, at all times, been chiefly supported, It has, for instance, been assumed by the advocates of this theological theory, that all things which come to pass have been fixed by eternal DECREES; and that as many men actually perish, it must, therefore, have been decreed that they should perish: and, consistently with such a scheme, it became necessary to exclude a part of the human race from all share in the benefits of Christ's redemption. The argument employed to

confirm the premises is, "that it is agreeable to reason and to the analogy of nature, that God should conduct all things according to a deliberate and fixed plan, independent of his creatures, rather than that he should be influenced, even in his purposes, by the foresight of their capricious conduct." (Dr. rankin's Institutes.) "It is not easy to reconcile the immutability and efficacy of the Divine counsel which enters into our conceptions of the first cause, with a purpose to save all,

suspended upon a condition which is not fulfilled with regard to many." (Dr. hill's Lectures.) This has, indeed, all along been the main stress of the argument for absolute decrees, that a conditional decree reflects Dishonor upon the Divine attributes, "by leaving God, as it were, in suspense, and waiting to see what men will do, before he passes a firm and irrevocable decree;" which, as they say, seems to imply want of power and prescience in God, and to be inconsistent with other of his Divine perfections.

They especially think, that this is irreconcilable with the immutability of God, and that to subject his decrees to the changes of a countless number of mutable beings, must render him the most mutable being in the universe.

The whole of this objection, however, seems to involve a petitio prin-cipi It is taken for granted, either that the decrees of God are absolute appointments from eternity, and then any change of his decrees, dependent upon the acts of

creatures, would be a contradiction; or else, hat the acts of creatures being free, it follows, that God had from eternity no plan, and conducts his own government only as circumstances may arise. But, that either the decrees of God are fixed and absolute, or, that God can have no plan of government if that be denied, is the very alternative to be proved, the matter which is in debate. It becomes necessary, therefore, in order to ascertain the truth, to fix the sense of the

favorite term "decrees," and for this we have no sound guide but the Holy Scriptures, which, as to what relates to man's salvation at least, contain the only exposition of the purposes of God.

The term "decree" is nowhere in Scripture used in the sense in which it is taken in the theology of the Calvinists. It is properly a legislative or judicial term, importing the solemn decision of a court, and was adopted into that system, probably, because of the absolute meaning it

conveys, which quality of absoluteness is, in fact, the point debated. The "purpose" and "counsel" of God are the Scriptural terms applicable to this subject; one of which, "counsel" expresses an act of wisdom, and the other necessarily implies it, as it is the "purpose" design, or determination of a Being of infinite perfection, who can purpose, design, will, and determine nothing but under the direction of his intelligence, and the regulation of his moral attributes.

Terms are not indeed to be objected to merely because they are not found in the word of GOD; but their signification must be controlled by it, otherwise, as in the case of the terra decrees, a meaning is often silently brought in under covert of the term, which becomes a postulate in argument: a practice which has been a fruitful source of misapprehension and error. The decrees of God, if the phrase then must be continued, can only Scripturally signify the determinations of his will in his government of the

world he has made; and those determinations are plainly, in Scripture, referred to two classes, what he has himself determined to do, and what he has determined to permit to be done by free and accountable creatures. He determined, for instance, to create man, and he determined to permit his fall; he determined also the only method of dispensing pardon to the guilty, but he determined to permit men to reject it, and to fall into the punishment of their offences. Calvin, indeed,

rejects the doctrine of permission. "It is not probable," he says, "that man procured his own destruction by the mere permission, and without any appointment of God." He had reason for this; for to have allowed this distinction would have been contrary to the main principles of his theological system, which are, that "the will of God is the necessity of things," and that all things are previously fixed by an absolute decree; so that they must happen. The consequence is, that he and

his followers involve themselves in the tremendous consequence of making God the author of sin; which, after all their disavowals, and we grant them sincere, will still logically cleave to them: for it is obvious, that by nothing can we fairly avoid this consequence but by allowing the distinction between determinations to do, on the part of God, and determinations to permit certain things to be done by others. The principle laid down by Calvin is destructive of all human agency, seeing it converts

man into a mere instrument; while the other maintains his agency in its proper sense, and, therefore, his proper accountability. On Calvin's principle, man is no more an agent than the knife in the hand of the assassin; and he is not more responsible, therefore, in equity, to punishment, than the knife by which the assassination is committed, were k capable of being punished. For if man has not a real agency, that is, if there is a necessity above him so controlling his actions as to render it

impossible that they should have been otherwise, be is in the hands of another, and not master of himself, and so his actions cease to be his own.

A decree to permit involves no such consequences. This is indeed acknowledged; but then, on the other hand, it is urged that this imposes an uncertainty upon the Divine plans, and makes him dependent upon the acts of the creature. In neither of these allegations is there any weight; for as to the first, there can be no

uncertainty in the principles of the administration of a Being who regulates the whole by the immutable rules of righteousness, holiness truth, and goodness; so that all the acts of the creature do but call forth some new illustration of his unchangeable regard to these principles. Nor can any act of a creature render his plans uncertain by coming upon him by surprise, and thus oblige him to alter his intentions on the spur of the moment. What the creature will do, in fact, is known

beforehand with a perfect pre-science, which yet, as we have already proved, (Part ii, c. 4,) interferes not with the liberty of our actions; and what God has determined to do in consequence, is made apparent by what he actually does, which with him can be no new, no sudden thought, but known and purposed from eternity, in the view of the actual circumstances. As to the second objection, that this makes his conduct dependent upon the acts of the creature, so far from denying it we may affirm it

to be one of the plainest doctrines of the word of God. He punishes or blesses men according to their conduct; and he waits until the acts of their sin or their obedience take place, before he either punishes or rewards. The dealings of a sovereign judge must, in the nature of things themselves, be dependent upon the conduct of the subjects over whom he rules: they must vary affording to that conduct; and it is only in the principles of a righteous government that we ought to look, for that kind of

immutability which has any thing in it of moral character. Still it is said, that though the acts of God, as a sovereign, change, and are, apparently, dependent upon the conduct of creatures, yet that he, from all eternity, decreed, or determined to do them: as for instance, to exalt one nation and to abase another; to favor this individual, or to punish that; to save this man, to destroy the other. This may be granted; but only in this sense, that his eternal determination or decree

was as dependent and consequent upon his prescience of the acts which, according to the immutable principles of his nature and government, are pleasing or hateful to him, as the actual administration of favor or punishment is upon the actual conduct of men in time. This brings on the question of decrees absolute or conditional; and we are, happily, not left to the reasonings of men on this point; but have the light of the word of God, which abounds with examples of decrees, to

which conditions are annexed, on the performance or neglect of which, by his creatures, their execution is made dependent. "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? but if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." If this was God's eternal decree concerning Cain, then it was plainly conditional from eternity; for his decrees in time cannot contradict his decrees from eternity, as to the same persons and events. But Cain did "not well;" was it not, then, says a Calvinist, eternally and

absolutely decreed that he should not "do well?" The reply is, NO; because this supposed absolute decree of the Calvinist would contradict the revealed decree or determination of God, to put both the doing well and the doing ill into Cain's own power, which is utterly inconsistent with an absolute decree that he should have it in his power only to do ill; and the inevitable conclusion, therefore, is, that the only eternal decree, or Divine determination concerning Cain in this matter was, that he should be

conditionally accepted, or conditionally left to the punishment of his sins. To this class of conditional decrees belong also all such passages, as, "If ye be willing and obedient ye shall eat the good of the land; but if ye refuse and rebel ye shall be devoured by the sword." "If ye live after the flesh ye shall die; but if ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." "He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." This last, especially, is God's decree

or determination, as to all who hear the Gospel, to the end of time. It professes to be so on the very face of it, for its general and unrestricted nature cannot be denied; but if we are told, that there is a decree affecting numbers of men as individuals, by which God determined absolutely to pass them by, and to deny to them the grace of faith, such an allegation cannot be true; because it contradicts the decree as revealed by God himself. His decree gives to all who hear the news of Christ's salvation, the alternative of

believing and being saved, of not believing and being damned; but there is no alternative in the absolute decree of Calvinism: as to the reprobate, no one can believe and be saved who is under such decree: God never intended he should; and, therefore, he is put by one decree in one condition, and by another decree in an entirely opposite condition, which is an obvious contradiction.

But we have instances of the revocation of God's decrees, as well as of their conditional character, one

of which will be sufficient for illustration. In the case of Eli, "I said indeed that thy house and the house of thy father should walk before me for ever; but now the Lord saith, be it far from me; for them that honor me I will honor, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed." No passage can more strongly refute the Calvinistic notion of God's immutability, which they seem to place in his never changing his purpose, whereas, in fact, the Scriptural doctrine is, that it consists in his never

changing the principles of his administration. One of those principles is laid down in this passage. It is, "them that honor me I will honor, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed." To this principle God is immutably true; but it was his unchangeable regard to that very principle which brought on the change of his conduct toward the house of Eli, and induced him to revoke his former promise. This is the only immutability worthy of God, or which can be reconciled to the facts of

his government. For either the advocate of absolute predestination must say that the promises and threatenings are declarations of his will and purposes, or they are not. If they are not, they contradict his truth; but if the point, that they do in fact declare his will is conceded, that will is either absolute or conditional. Let us then try the case of Eli by this alternative. If the promise of continuing the priesthood in the family of Eli were absolute, then it could not be revoked. If the threatening expressed an

absolute and eternal will and determination to divert the priesthood from Eli's progeny, then the promise was a mockery; and God is in this, and all similar instances, made to engage himself to do what is contrary to his absolute intention and determination: in other words, he makes no engagement in fact, while he seems to do it in form, which involves a charge against the Divine Being which few Calvinists would be bold enough to maintain. But if these declarations to Eli be

regarded as the expressions of a determination always taken, in the mind of God, under the conditions implied in the fixed principles of his government, then the language and the acts of God harmonize with his sincerity and faithfulness, and, instead of throwing a shade over his moral attributes, illustrate his immutable regard to those wise, equitable, and holy rules by which he conducts his government of moral agents. Nor will the distinction which some Calvinists have endeavored

to establish between the promises and threatenings of God and his decrees, serve them; for where is it to be found except in their own imagination? We have no intimation of such a distinction in Scripture, which, nevertheless, professes to reveal the eternal "purpose" and

"counsel" of God on those matters to which his promises and threatenings relate, - the salvation or destruction of men. That counsel and purpose has, also, no manifestation in his word, but by promises

and threatenings; these make up its whole substance, and, therefore, in order to make their distinction good, those who hold it must discover a distinction not only between God's promises and threatenings and his decrees; but between the eternal "counsels and purposes" of God and his decrees, which they acknowledge to be identical.

The fallacy which seems to mislead them appears to be the following: They allege that of two consequences,

say the obedience or disobedience of Eli's house, we acknowledge, on both sides, that one will happen. That which actually happens we also see taken up into the course of the Divine administration, and made a part of his subsequent plan of government, as the transfer of the priesthood from the house of Eli: they, therefore, argue that the Divine Being, having his plan before him, and this very circumstance entering into it, it was fixed from eternity as a part of that general scheme by which

the purposes of God were to be accomplished, and which would have been uncertain and un-arranged but for this preordination. The answer to this is, 1. That the circumstance of an event being taken up into the Divine administration, and being made use of to work out God's purposes, is no proof that he willed and decreed it. He could not will the wickedness of Eli's sons, and could not, therefore, ordain and appoint it, or his decrees would be contrary to his will. The making use of the result of

the choice of a free agent, only proves that it was foreseen, and that there are, so to speak, infinite resources in the Divine mind to turn the actions of men into the accomplishment of his plans, without either willing them when they are evil, or imposing fetters upon their freedom.

2. That though an event be interwoven with the course of the Divine government, it does not follow that it was necessary to it. The ends of a course of administration might have

been otherwise accomplished; as, in the case before us, if Eli's house had remained faithful, and the family of Zadok had not been chosen in its stead. The general plan of God's government does not, therefore, necessarily include every event which happens as a necessary part of its accomplishment, since the same results might, in many cases, have been brought out of other events; and, therefore, it cannot be conclusively argued, that as God wills the accomplishment of the

general plan, he must will in the same manner the particular events which he may overrule to contribute to it. But,

3. As to the general plan, it is also an unfounded assumption, that it was the subject of an absolute determination. From this has arisen the notion that the fall of Adam was willed and decreed by God. To this doctrine, which, for the sake of a metaphysical speculation, draws after it so many abhorrent and antiscriptural consequences, we must

demur. God could not will that event actively without willing sin: he could not absolutely decree it without removing all responsibility, and, there, fore, all fault from the first offender. If God be holy, he could not will Adam's offence, though he might determine not to prevent it by interfering with man's freedom, which is a very different case; and if in guarding his law from violation by a severe sanction, he proceeded with sincerity, he could not appoint its violation. We may confidently say, that he willed the contrary of

Adam's offence; and that he used all means consistent with his determination to give and maintain free agency to his creatures, to secure the accomplishment of that will. It was against his will, therefore, that our progenitors sinned and fell; and his "purpose"

and "counsel," or his decree, if the term please better, to govern the world according to the principles and mode now in operation, was dependent upon an event which he willed not; but which, as

being foreseen, was the plan he in wisdom, justice, and mercy, adopted in the view of this contingency. And suppose we were to acknowledge with some, that the result will be more glorious to him, and more beneficial to the universe, through the wisdom with which he overrules all things, than if Adam and his descendants had stood in their innocency, it will not follow, even from this, that the present was that order of events which God absolutely ordered and decreed. We are told, indeed, that if this was the

best of possible plans, God was, by the perfection of his nature, bound to choose it; and that if he chose it, his will, in this respect, made all the rest necessary. But, to say nothing of the presumption of determining what God was bound to do in any hypothetic case, the position that God must choose the best of possible plans is to be taken with qualification. We can neither prove that the state of things which shall actually issue is the best among those possible; nor that among possible

systems there can be a best, since they are all composed of created things, and no system can actually exist, to which the Creator, who is infinite in power, could not add something. Were no sin involved in the case it would be clearer; but it is not only unsupported by any declaration of Scripture, but certainly contrary to many of its principles, to assume that God originally, so to speak, and, in the first instance, willed and decreed a state of things which should necessarily include the introduction of moral evil

into his creation, in order to manifest his glory, and work out future good to the creature; because we know that sin is that "abominable thing" which he hateth. A monarch is surely not bound secretly to appoint and decree the circumstances which must necessarily lead to a rebellion, in order that his clemency may be more fully manifested in pardoning the rebels, or the strength of his government displayed in their subjugation; although his subjects, upon the whole, might derive some

higher benefit. We may, therefore, conclude that God willed with perfect truth and sincerity that man should not fall, although he resolved not to prevent that fall by interfering with his freedom, which would have changed the whole character of his government toward rational creatures; and that his plan, or decree, to govern the world upon the principle of redemption and mediation was no absolute ordination, but conditional upon man's offence; and was an

"eternal purpose," only in the eternal foresight of the actual occurrence of the fall of man, which yet, it is no contra-diction to say, was against his will.

So fallacious are all such notions as to God's fixed plans. Fixed they may be, without being absolutely decreed; because fixed, in reference to what takes place, even in opposition to his will and intention; and as to the argument drawn by Calvinists from the perfections of God, it is surely a more honorable view of him to suppose that

his will and his promulgated law accord and consent, than that they are in opposition to each other; more honorable to him, that he is immutable in his adherence to the principles, rather than in the acts of government; more honorable to him, that he can make the conduct of his free creatures to work out either his original purposes, or purposes more glorious to himself and beneficial to the universe, than that he should frame plans so fixed as to have no reference to

the free actions of creatures, whom, by a strange contradiction, he is represented as still holding accountable for their conduct; plans which all these creatures shall be necessitated to fulfill, so as to be capable of no other course of action whatever, or else that his government must become loose and uncertain. This is, indeed, to have low thoughts, even of the infinite wisdom of GOD; and either involves his justice and truth in deep obscurity, or presents them to us under very equivocal aspects. Which of

these views is the most consonant with the Bible, may be safely left with the candid reader.

The prescience of God is also a subject by which Calvinists have endeavored to give some plausibility to their system. The argument as popularly stated, has been, that, as the destruction or salvation of every individual is foreseen, it is, therefore, certain, and, as certain, it is inevitable and necessary. The answer to this is, that certainty and necessity are not at all connected in the

nature of things, and are, in fact, two perfectly distinct predicaments. Certainty has no relation to an event at all as evitable or inevitable, free or compelled, contingent or necessary. It relates only to the issue itself, the act of any agent, not to the quality of the act or event with reference to the circumstances under which it is produced. A free action is as much an event as a necessitated one, and, therefore, is as truly an object of foresight, which foresight cannot change the nature of the action, or of

the process through which it issues, because the simple knowledge of an action, whether present, past, or to come, has no influence upon it of any kind. Certainty is, in fact, no quality of an action at all; it exists, properly speaking, in the mind foreseeing, and not in the action foreseen; but freedom or constraint, contingency or necessity qualify the action itself, and determine its nature, and the rewardableness, or punitive demerit of the agent. When, therefore, it is said, that what God

foresees, will certainly happen, nothing more can be reasonably meant, than that he is certain that it will happen; so that we must not transfer the certainty from God to the action itself, in the false sense of necessity, or, indeed, in any sense; for the certainty is in the Divine mind, and stands there opposed, not to the contingency of the action, but to doubtfulness as to his own prescience of the result. There is this certainty in the Divine mind as to the actions of men, that they will happen: but that they must happen

cannot follow from this circumstance. If they must happen, they are under some control which prevents a different result; but the most certain knowledge has nothing in it which, from its nature, can control an action in any way, unless it should lead the being endow-ed with it, to adopt measures to influence the action, and then it be-comes a question, not of foreknowledge, but of power and influence, which wholly changes the case. This is a sufficient reply to the popular manner of

stating the argument. The scholastic method requires a little more illustration.

The knowledge of possible things, as existing from all eternity in the Divine understanding, has been termed "scientia simplicis intelligent-tiae," or by the schoolmen, "scientia indefinita" as not determining the existence of any thing. The knowledge which God had of all real existences is termed "scientia visionis" and by the schoolmen, "scientia definita" because the existence of all objects

of this knowledge is determinate and certain. To these distinctions another was added by those who rejected the predestinarian hypothesis, to which they gave the name "scientia media,"

as being supposed to stand in the middle between the two former. By this is understood, the knowledge, neither of things as possible, nor of events appointed and decreed by God; but of events which are to happen upon certain conditions. (3)

(3) "Ordo autem hic ut recte intelligi possit, obsetvandum est triplicem Deo scientiam tribui solere: unam necessariam, quae omnem voluntatis liberae actum naturae ordine antecedit, quae etiam practica et simplicis intetligentiae dici potest, qua seipsum et alia omnia possibilia intelligit. Alteram liberam., quae consequitur actum voluntatis liberae, quae etiam visionis dici potest; qua Deus omnia, quae facere et permittere decrevit ita distincte novit, uti ea fieri et permittere

voluit. Tertiam mediam, qua sub conditione novit quid homines aut angeli facturi essent pro sua libertate, si cum his aut illis circumstantiis, in hoc vel in illo rerum ordine, constituerentur."
(Disputat. Episcopii. part i, disp. v.) The third kind of knowledge, or scientia media, might very well be included in the second, since scientia visionis ought to include not what God will do, and what his creatures will do under his appointment, but what they will do by his permission as free agents,

and what he will do, as a consequence of this, in his character of Governor and Lord. But since the predestinarians had confounded scientia visionis with a predestinating decree, the scientia media well expressed what they had left quite unaccounted for, and which they had assumed did not really exist, - the actions of creatures endowed with free will, and the acts of Deity which from eternity were consequent upon them. If such actions do not take place, then men

are not free; and if the rectoral acts of God are not consequent upon the actions of the creature in the order of the Divine intention, and the conduct of the creature is consequent upon the foreordained rectoral acts of God, then we reach a necessitating eternal decree, which, in fact, the predestinarian contends for: but it unfortunately brings after it consequences which no subtitles have ever been able to shake off, - that the only actor in the universe is God himself; and that the

only distinction among events is, that one class is brought to pass by God directly, and the other indirectly; not by the agency, but by the mere instrumentality of his creatures.

The manner in which absolute predestination is made identical with scientia visionis, will be best illustrated by an extract from the writings of a tolerably fair and temperate modern Calvinist.

Speaking of the two distinctions, scientia

simplicis intelligentae and scientia visioni, he says:-

"Those who consider all the objects of knowledge as comprehended under one or other of the kinds that have been explained, are naturally conducted to that enlarged conception of the extent of the Divine decree, from which the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination unavoidably follows.

The Divine decree is the determination of the Divine will to produce the universe, that is, the whole series of beings and events that were then future. The

parts of this series arise in succession; but all were, from eternity, present to the Divine mind; and no cause was, at any time, to operate, or no effect that was at any time to be produced in the universe, can be excluded from the original decree, with-out supposing that the decree was at first imperfect and afterward received accessions. The determination to produce this world, under standing by that word the whole combination of beings, and causes, and effects, that were to come into

existence, arose out of the view of all possible worlds, and proceeded upon reasons to us unsearchable, by which this world that now exists appeared to the Divine wisdom the fittest to be produced. I say, the determination to produce this world proceeded upon reasons; because we must suppose, that in forming the decrees, a choice was exerted, that the Supreme Being was at liberty to resolve either that he would create or that he would not create; that he would give his work this form or that form, as he

chose; otherwise we withdraw from the Supreme Intelligence, and subject all things to blind fatality. But if a choice was exerted in forming the decree, the choice must have proceeded upon reasons; for a choice made by a wise Being, without any ground of choice, is a contradiction in terms. At the same time it is to be remembered, that as nothing then existed but the Supreme Being, the only reason which could determine him in choosing what he was to produce, was its appearing to him

fitter for accomplishing the end which he proposed to himself than any thing else which lie might have produced. Hence scientia visionis is called by theologians scientia libera. To scientia simplicis intelligentia, they gave the epithet naluralis, because the knowledge of all things possible arises necessarily from the nature of the Supreme mind; but to scientia visionis they gave the epithet libera, because the qualities and extent of its objects are determined, not by any necessity of nature, but by the will of

the Deity. Although in forming the Divine decree there was a choice of this world, proceeding upon a representation of all possible worlds, it is not to be conceived, that there was any interval between the choice and representation, or any succession in the parts of the choice. In the Divine mind there was an intuitive view of that immense subject, which it is not only impossible for our minds to comprehend at once, but in traveling through the parts of which we are instantly bewildered; and one

decree, embracing at once the end and means, ordained with perfect wisdom fill that was to be.

"The condition of the human race entered into this decree. It is not, perhaps, the most important part of it when we speak of the formation of the universe, but it is a part which, even were it more insignificant than it is, could not be overlooked by the Almighty, whose attention extends to all his works, and which appears, by those dispensations of his providence that have

been made known to us, to be interesting in his eyes. A decree respecting the condition of the human race includes the history of every individual: the time of his appearing upon the earth; the manner of his existence while he is an inhabitant of the earth, as it is diversified by the actions which he performs, and by the events, whether prosperous or calamitous, which befall him, and the manner of his existence after he leaves the earth, that is, future happiness or misery. A decree respecting the condition of the human

race also includes the relations of the individuals to one another: it fixes their connections in society, which have a great influence upon their happiness and their improvement; and it must be conceived as extending to the important events recorded in Scripture, in which the whole species have a concern. Of this kind is the sin of our first parents, the consequence of that sin reaching to all their posterity, the mediation of Jesus Christ appointed by God as a remedy for these

consequences, the final salvation, through his mediation, of one part of the descendants of Adam, and the final condemnation of another part, notwithstanding the remedy. These events arise at long intervals of time, by a gradual preparation of circumstances, and the operation of various means. But by the Creator, to whose mind the end and means were at once present, these events were beheld in intimate connection with one another, and in conjunction with many

other events to us unknown, and consequently all of them, however far removed from one another as to the time of their actual existence, were comprehended in that one decree by which he determined to produce the world." (Hill's Lectures, vol. iii, page 38.)

Now some things in this statement may be granted; as for instance, that when the choice, speaking after the manner of men, was between creating the world and not creating it, it appeared fitter to God to

create than not to create; and that all actual events were foreseen and will take place, so far as they are future, as they are foreseen; but where is the connection between these points, and that absolute decree which in this passage is taken for either the same thing as foreseeing, or as necessarily involved in it? "The Divine decree," says Dr. Hill, "is the determination of the Divine will to produce the universe, that is, the whole series of beings and events that were then future." If

so, it follows, that it was the Divine will to produce the fall of man, as well as his creation; the offences which made redemption necessary, as the redemption itself: to produce the destruction of human beings, and their vices which are the means of that destruction; the salvation of another part of the race, and their faith and obedience, as the means of that salvation:- for by "one decree, embracing at once the end and the means, he ordained, with perfect wisdom, all that was to be."

This is in the true character of the Calvinistic theology; it dogmatizes with absolute confidence on some metaphysical assumption, and forgets for the time, that any such book as the Bible, a revelation of God, by God himself, exists in the world. If the determination of the Divine will, with respect to the creation of man, were the same kind of determination as that which respected his fall, how then are we to account for the means taken by God to prevent the fall, which were no less than the

communication of an upright and perfect nature to man, from which his ability to stand in his uprightness arose, and the threatening of the greatest calamity, death, in order to deter him from the act of offence? How, in that case, are we to account for the declarations of God's hatred to sin, and for his own express declaration that

"he willeth not the death of him that dieth?" How, for the obstructions he has placed in the way of transgression, which would

be obstructions to his own determinations, if they can be allowed to be obstructions at all? How, for the intercession of Christ? How, for his tears shed over Jerusalem? Finally, how, for the declaration that "he willeth all men to be saved," and for his invitations to all, and the promises made to all? Here the discrepancies between the metaphysical scheme and the writ-ten word are most strongly marked; are so totally irreconcilable to each other, as to leave us to choose between the

speculations of man, as to the operations of the Divine mind, and the declared will of God himself, The fact is, that Scripture can only be interpreted by denying that the determination of the Divine will is, as to "beings and events" the same kind of determination: and we are necessarily brought back again to the only distinction which is compatible with the written word, a determination in God to do, and a determination to permit. For if we admit that the decree to effect or

produce is absolute, both "as to the end and means," then, beside the consequences which follow as above stated, and which so directly contradict the testimony of God himself, another equally revolting also arises, namely, that as the end decreed is, as we are told, most glorious to God, so the means, being controlled and directed to that end, are necessarily and directly connected with the glorification of God; and so men glorify God by their vices, because by them they fulfill his will, and work out his designs

according to the appointment of his "wisdom." That this has been boldly contended for by leading Calvinistic divines in former times, and by some, though of a lower class, in the present day, is well known: and that they are consistent in their deductions from the above premises, is so obvious, that it is matter of surprise, that those Calvinists who are shocked at this conclusion should not either suspect the principles from which it so certainly flows, or that, admitting the doctrine,

they should shun the explicit avowal of the inevitable consequence.

The sophistry of the above statement of the Calvinistic view of prescience and the decrees, as given by Dr. Hill, lies in this, that the determination of the Divine will to produce the universe is made to include a determination as absolute "to produce the whole series of beings and events that were then future;" and in assuming that this is involved in a perfect prescience of things, as actually to exist

and take place. But among the "beings" to be produced, were not only beings bound by their instincts, and by circumstances which they could not control, to act in some given manner; but also beings endowed with such freedom that they might act in different and opposite ways, as their own will might determine. Either this must be allowed or denied. If it is denied, then man is not a free agent, and, therefore, not accountable for his personal offences, if offences those acts can be

called, to the doing of which there is "a determination of the Divine will," of the same nature as to the "producing of the universe" itself. This, however, is so destructive of the nature of virtue and vice; it so entirely subverts the moral government of God by merging it into his natural government; and it so manifestly contradicts the word of God, which, from the beginning to the end, supposes a power bestowed on man to avoid sin, and on this establishes his accountableness; that, with all these fatal

consequences hanging upon it, we may leave this notion to its own fate. But if any such freedom be allowed to man, (either actually enjoyed or placed within his reach by the use of means which are within his power,) that he may both will and act differently, in any given case, from his ultimate volitions and the acts resulting there from, then cannot that which he actually does, as a free agent, say some sinful act, have been

"determined" in the same manner by the Divine will, as the "production" of the universe and the

"beings" which compose it. For if man is a being free to sin or not to sin; and it was the

"determination of the Divine will" to produce such a being; it was his determination to give to him this liberty of not doing that which actually he does; which is wholly contrary to a determination that he should act in one given manner, and in that alone. For here, on the one

hand, it is alleged that the Divine will absolutely determines to produce certain "events" and yet on the other it is plain that he absolutely determined to produce "beings" who should, by his will and consequent endowment, have in themselves the power to produce contrary events; propositions which manifestly fight with each other, and cannot both be true. We must either, then, give up man's free agency and true accountability, or this absolute determination of events.

The former cannot be renounced without involving the consequences above stated; and the abandoning of the latter brings us to the only conclusion which agrees with the word of God, -

that the acts of free agents are not determined, but foreseen and permitted; and are thus taken up, not as the acts of God, but as the acts of men, into the Divine government, "Ye devised evil against me," says Joseph to his brethren, "but God meant it for good." Thus the

principle which vitiates Dr. Hill's statement is detected. Grotius has much better observed, "When we say that God is the cause of all things, we mean of all such things as have a real existence; which is no reason why those things themselves should not be the cause of some accidents, such as actions are. God created men, and some other intelligences superior to man, with a liberty of acting; which liberty of acting is not in itself evil, but may be the cause of something that is evil; and to make God the

author of evils of this kind, which are called moral evils, is the highest wickedness." (Truth of the Christian Religion, s. 8.)

Perhaps the notions which Calvinists form as to the will may be regarded as a consequence of the predestinarian branch of their system; but whether they are among the metaphysical sources of their error, or consequents upon it, they may here have a brief notice.

If the doctrine just refuted were allowed, namely, that all events are produced by

the determination of the Divine will; and that the end and means are bound up in "one decree;" the predestinarian had sagacity enough to discern that the volitions, as well as the ads of men, must be placed equally under bondage, to make the scheme consistent; and, that whenever any moral action is the end proposed, the choice of the will, as the means to that end, must come under the same appointment and determination. It is, indeed not denied, that creatures may lose the power to will

that which is morally good. Such is the state of devils, and such would have been the state of man, had he been left wholly to the consequences of the fall. The inability is, however, not a natural, but a moral one; for volition, as a power of the mind, is not destroyed, but brought so completely under the dominion of a corrupt nature, as not to be morally capable of choosing any thing but evil. If man is not in this condition, it is owing, not to the remains of original goodness, as some suppose, but to that

"grace of God" which is the result of the "free gift" bestowed upon all men; but that the power to choose that which is good, in some respects, and as a first step to the entire and exclusive choice of good in the highest degree, is in man's possession, must be certainly concluded from the calls so often made upon him in the word of God to change his conduct, and, in order to this, his will, "Hear, ye deaf, and see, ye blind," is the exhortation of a prophet, which, while it charges both spiritual deafness and

blindness upon the Jews, supposes a power existing in them both of opening the eyes, and unstopping the ears. Such are all the exhortations to repentance and faith addressed to sinners, and the threatenings consequent upon continued impenitence and unbelief; which equally suppose a power of considering, willing, and acting, in all things adequate to the commencement of a religious course. From whatever source it may be derived, and no other can be assigned to it

consistently with the Scriptures than the grace of God, this power must be experienced to the full extent of the call and the obligation to these duties. A power of choosing only to do evil, and of remaining impenitent, cannot be reconciled to such exhortations. This would but be a mockery of men, and a mere show of equitable government on the part of God, without any thing correspondent to this appearance of equity in point of fact. The Calvinistic doctrine, however, takes another

course. As the sin and the destruction of the reprobate is determined by the decree, and their will is either left to its natural proneness to the choice of evil, or is, by coaction, impelled to it; so the salvation of the elect being absolutely decreed, the will, at the appointed time, comes under an irresistible impulse which carries it to the choice of good. Nor is this only an occasional influence, leaving men afterward, or by intervals, to freedom of choice, which might be allowed; but, in all cases, and at all times,

the will, when directed to good, moves only under the unfrustrable impulses of grace. That man, therefore, has no choice, or at least no alternative in either case, is the doctrine assumed; and no other view can be consistently taken by those who admit the scheme of absolute predestination. To one class of objects is the will determined; no other being, in either case, possible; and thus one course of action, fulfilling the decree of God, is the only possible result, or the decree would not be absolute and fixed.

Some Calvinists have adopted all the consequences which follow this view of the subject. They ascribe the actions and volitions of man to God, and regard sinful men as impelled to a necessity of sinning, in order to the infliction of that punishment which they think will glorify the sovereign wrath of him who made "the wicked" intentionally "for the day of evil." Enough has been said in refutation of this gross and blasphemous opinion, which, though it inevitably follows from absolute

predestination, the more modest writers of the same school have endeavored to hide under various guises, or to reconcile to some show of justice by various subtitles.

It has, for instance, been contended, that as in the case of transgressors, the evil acts done by them are the choice of their corrupt will, they are, therefore, done willingly; and that they are in consequence punishable although their will could not but choose them. This may be allowed to be true in the case of

devils, supposing them at first to have voluntarily corrupted an innocent nature endowed with the power of maintaining its innocence, and that they were under no absolute decree determining them to this offence. For, though now their will is so much under the control of their bad passions, and is in itself so vicious, that it has no disposition at all to good, and from their nature, remaining in its present state, can have no such tendency; yet the original act, or series of acts, by which this state of

their will and affections was induced, being their own, and the result of a deliberate choice between moral good and evil, both being in their own power, they are justly held to be culpable for all that follows, having had, originally, the power to avoid both the first sin and all others consequent upon it. The same may be said of sinful men, who have formed in themselves, by repeated acts of evil, at first easily avoided, various habits to which the will opposes a decreasing resistance in proportion as

they acquire strength. Such persons, too, as are spoken of in the Epistle to the Hebrews, those whom "it is impossible to renew unto repentance," may be regarded as approaching very nearly to the state of apostate spirits, and being left without any of the aids of that Holy Spirit whom they have

"quenched," cannot be supposed capable of willing good. Yet are they themselves justly chargeable with this state of their wills, and all the evils resulting from it. But

the case of devils is widely different to that of men who, by their hereditary corruption, and the fall of human nature, to which they were not consenting parties, come into the world with this infirm, and, indeed, perverse state of the will, as to all good. It is not their personal fault that they are born with a will averse from good; and it cannot be their personal fault that they continue thus inclined only to evil if no assistance has been afforded, no gracious influence imparted, to counteract this fault of

nature, and to set the will so far free, that it can choose either the good urged upon it by the authority and exciting motives of the Gospel, or, "making light" of that, to yield itself, in opposition to conviction, to the evil to which it is by nature prone. It is not denied, that the will, in its purely natural state, and independent of all grace communicated to man through Christ, can incline only to evil; but the question is, whether it is so left; and whether, if this be contended for, the circumstance of a sinful act

being the act of a will not able to determine otherwise, from whatever cause that may arise, whether from the influence of circumstances or from coaction, or from its own invincible depravity, renders him punishable who never had the means of preventing his will from lapsing into this diseased and vitiated state; who was born with this moral disease; and who, by an absolute decree, has been excluded from all share in the remedy? This is the only simple and correct way of viewing the subject;

and it is quite independent of all metaphysical hypothesis as to the will. The argument is, that an act which has the consent of the will is punishable, although the will can only choose evil: we reply, that this is only true where the time of trial is past, as in devils and apostates; and then only, because these are personally guilty of having so vitiated their wills as to render them incapable of good. But the case of men who have fallen by the fault of another, and who are still in a state of trial, is one

totally different. The sentence is passed upon devils, and it is as good as passed upon such apostates as the apostle describes in the Epistle to the Hebrews; but the mass of mankind are still probationers, and are appointed to be judged according to their works, whether good or evil. We deny, then, first, that they are in any case, left without the power of willing good; and we deny it on ' the authority of Scripture. For, in no sense, can "life and death be set before us," in order that we may "choose life," if man is wholly

derelict by the grace of God, and if he remains under his natural, and, but for the grace of God given to all mankind, his invincible inclination to evil. For if this be the natural state of mankind, and if to a part of them that remedial grace is denied, then is not "life" set before them as an object of "choice;" and if to another part that grace is so given, that it irresistibly and constantly works so as to compel the will to choose predetermined and absolutely appointed acts, no "death" is set before

them as an object of choice. If, therefore, according to the Scriptures, both life and death are set before men, then have they power to choose or refuse either, which is conclusive, on the one hand, against the doctrine of the total dereliction of the reprobate, and on the other, against the unfrustrable operation of grace upon the elect. So, also, when our Lord says, "I would have gathered you as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not," the notion that men who finally perish have no

power of willing that which is good, is totally disproved. The blame is manifestly, and beyond all the arts of caviling criticism, laid upon their not willing in a contrary manner, which would be false upon the Calvinistic hypothesis. "I would not, and ye could not," ought, in that case, to have been the reading; since they are bound to one determination only, either by the external or internal influence of another, or by a natural and involuntary disease of the will, for

which no remedy was ever provided.

Thus it is decided by the word of God itself, that men who perish might have "chosen life." It is confirmed, also, by natural reason; for it is most egregiously to trifle with the common sense of mankind to call that a righteous procedure in God which would by all men be condemned as a monstrous act of tyranny and oppression in a human judge, namely, to punish capitally, as for a personal offence, those who never

could will or act otherwise, being impelled by an invincible and incurable natural impulse over which they never had any control. - Nor is the case at all amended by the quibble that they act willingly, that is, with consent of the will; for since the will is under a natural and irresistible power to incline only one way, obedience is full as much out of their power by this state of the will, which they did not bring upon themselves, as if they were restrained from all obedience to the law of God by an external and

irresistible impulse always acting upon them.

The case thus kept upon the basis of plain Scripture, and the natural reason of mankind, stands, as we have said, clear of all metaphysical subtitles, and cannot be subjected to their determination; but as attempts have been made to establish the doctrine of necessity, from the actual phenomena of the human will, we may glance, also, at this philosophic attempt to give plausibility to the predestinarian hypothesis.

The philosophic doctrine is, that the will is swayed by motives; that motives arise from circumstances; that circumstances are ordered by a power above us, and beyond our control; and that, therefore, our volitions necessarily follow an order and chain of events appointed and decreed by infinite wisdom. President Edwards, in his well known work on the will, applied this philosophy in aid of Calvinism; and has been largely followed by the divines of that school. But who does not see that this

attempt to find a refuge in the doctrine of philosophical necessity affords no shelter to the Calvinian system, when pressed either by Scripture or by arguments founded upon the acknowledged principles of justice? For what matters it, whether the will is obliged to one class of volitions by the immediate influence of God, or by the denial of his remedial influence, the doctrine of the elder Calvinists; or that it is obliged to a certain class of volitions by motives which are irresistible in their

operation, which result from an arrangement of circumstances ordered by God, and which we cannot control? Take which theory you please you are involved in the same difficulties; for the result is, that men can neither will nor act otherwise than they do, being, in one case, inevitably disabled by an act of God, and in the other bound by a chain of events established by an almighty power. The advocates for this philosophic theory of the will must be content to take this conclusion, therefore, and reconcile it

as they can with the Scriptures; but they have the same task as their elder brethren of the same faith, and have made it no easier by their philosophy.

It is in vain, too, that they refer us to our own consciousness in proof of this theory. Nothing is more directly contradicted by what passes in every man's mind; and if we may take the terms human language has used on these subjects, as an indication of the general feelings of mankind, it is contradicted by the experience of all

ages and countries. For if the will is thus absolutely dependent upon motives, and motives arise out of uncontrollable circumstances, for men to praise or to blame each other is a manifest absurdity; and yet all languages abound in such terms.

So, also, there can be no such thing as conscience, which, upon this scheme, is a popular delusion which a better philosophy might have dispelled. For why do I blame or commend myself in my inward

thoughts, anymore than I censure or praise others, if I am, as to my choice, but the passive creature of motives and predetermined circumstances?

But the sophistry is easily detected. The notion inculcated is, that motives influence the will just as an additional weight thrown into an even scale poises it and inclines the beam. This is the favorite metaphor of the necessitarians; yet, to make the comparison good, they ought to have first proved the will to be as passive as the balance, or,

in other words, they should have annihilated the distinction between mind and matter. But this necessary connection between motive and volition may be denied. For what are motives, as rightly understood here? Not physical causes, as a weight thrown into a scale; but reasons of choice, views and conceptions of things in the mind, which, themselves, do not work the will, as a machine; but in consideration of which, the mind itself wills and determines. But if the mind itself were obliged to

determine by the strongest motive, as the beam is to incline by the heaviest weight, it would be obliged to determine always by the best reason; for motive being but a reason of action considered in the mind, then the best reason, being in the nature of things the strongest, must always predominate.

But this is, plainly, contrary to fact and experience. If it were not, all men would act reasonably, and none foolishly; or, at least, there would be no faults among

them but those of the understanding, none of the heart and affections. The weakest reason, however, too generally succeeds when appetite and corrupt affection are present; that is to say, the weakest motive. For if this be not allowed, we must say, that under the influence of appetite the weakest reason always appears the strongest, which is also false, in fact; for then there would be no sins committed against judgment and conviction, and that many of our sins are of this description, our

consciences painfully convict us. That the mind wills and acts generally under the influence of motives, may, therefore, be granted; but that it is passive, and operated upon by them necessarily, is disproved by the fact of our often acting under the weakest reason or motive, which is the character of all sins against our judgment.

But were we even to admit that present reasons or motives operate irresistibly upon the will, the necessary connection between motive and

volition would not be established; unless it could be proved that we have no power to displace one motive by another, nor to control those circumstances from which motives flow. Yet, who will say that a per-son may not shun evil company, and fly from many temptations! Either this must be allowed, or else it must be a link in the necessary chain of events fixed by a superior power, that we should seek and not fly evil company; and so the exhortations, "when sinners entice thee consent

thou not," and "go not into the way of sinners," are very impertinent, and only prove that Solomon was no philosopher. But we are all conscious that we have the power to alter, and control, and avoid the force of motives.

If not, why does a man resist the same temptation at one time, and yield to it at another, without any visible change of the circumstances? He can also both change his circumstances by shunning evil company; and fly the occasions of temptation;

and control that motive at one time to which he yields at another, under similar circumstances. Nay, he sometimes resists a powerful temptation, which is the same thing as resisting a powerful motive, and yields at another to a feeble one, and is conscious that he does so: a sufficient proof that there is an irregularity and corruptness in the self-determining, active power of the mind, independent of motive. Still, farther, the motive or reason for an action may be a bad one, and yet be prevalent for

want of the presence of a better reason or motive to lead to a contrary choice and act; but, in how many instances is this the true cause why a better reason or stronger motive is not present, that we have lived thoughtless and vain lives, little considering the good or evil of things? And if so, then the thoughtless might have been more thoughtful, and the ignorant might have acquired better knowledge, and thereby have placed themselves under the influence of stronger and better motives. Thus this theory

does not accord with the facts of our own consciousness, but contradicts them. It is, also, refuted by every part of the moral history of man; and it may be, therefore, concluded that those speculations on the human will, to which the predestinarian theory has driven its advocates, are equally opposed to the words of Scripture, to the philosophy of mind, to our observation of what passes in others, and to our own convictions.

Our moral liberty manifestly consists in the united power of thinking and reasoning, and of choosing and acting upon such thinking and reasoning; so that the clearer our thought and conception is of what is fit and right, and the more constantly our choice is determined by it, the more nearly we rise to the highest acts and exercises of this liberty. The best beings have, therefore, the highest degree of moral liberty, since no motive to will or act wrong is any thing else but a violation of

this established and original connection between right reason, choice, and conduct; and if any necessity bind the irrational motive upon the will, it is either the result of bad voluntary habit, for which we are accountable; or necessity of nature and circumstances, for which we are not accountable. In the former case the actually influencing motive is evitable, and the theory of the necessitarians is disproved: in the latter it is confirmed; but then man is neither responsible to his fellow man, nor to God.

Certain notions as to the divine sovereignty have also been resorted to by Calvinists, in order to render that scheme plausible which cuts off the greater part of the human race from the hope of salvation by the absolute decree of God.

That the sovereignty of God is a Scriptural doctrine no one can deny; but it does not follow that the notions which men please to form of it should be received as Scriptural; for religious errors consist not only in denying the doctrines of

the word of God, but also in interpreting them fallaciously.

The Calvinistic view of God's sovereignty appears to be, his doing what he wills, only because he wills it. So Calvin himself has stated the case, as we have noticed above; but as this view is repugnant to all worthy notions of an infinitely wise Being, so it has no countenance in Scripture.

The doctrine which we are there taught is, that God's sovereignty consists in his doing many things by

virtue of his own supreme right and dominion; but that this right is under the direction of his "counsel" or "wisdom." The brightest act of sovereignty is that of creation, and one in which, if in any, mere will might seem to have the chief place; yet, even in this act, by which myriads of beings of diverse powers and capacities were produced, we are taught that all was done in "wisdom." Nor can it be said that the sovereignty of God in creation, is uncontrolled by either justice or goodness. If the final cause of

creation had been the misery of all sentient creatures, and all its contrivances had tended to that end: if, for instance, every sight had been disgusting, every smell a stench, every sound a scream, and every necessary function of life had been performed with pain, we must necessarily have referred the creation of such a world to a malignant being; and if we are obliged to think it impossible that a good being could have employed his almighty power with the direct intention to

inflict misery, we then concede that his acts of sovereignty are, by the very perfection of his nature, under the direction of his goodness, as to all creatures potentially existing, or actually existing while still innocent. Nor can we think it borne out by Scripture, or by the reasonable notions of mankind, that the exercise of God's sovereignty in the creation of things is exempt from any respect to justice, a quality of the Divine nature, which is nothing but his essential rectitude

in exercise. It is true, that as existence, under all circumstances in which to exist is better upon the whole than not to exist, leaves the creature no claim to have been otherwise than it is made; and that God has a sovereign right to make one being an archangel and another an insect; so that "the thing formed" may not say "to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus?" it could deserve nothing before creation, its being not having commenced: all that it is, and has, (its existent, state

being better than non-existence,) is, therefore, a boon conferred; and, in matters of grace, no axiom can be more clear, than that he who gratuitously be-stows has the right "to do what he will with his own." But every creature, having been formed without any consent of its own, if it be innocent of offence, either from the rectitude of its nature, or from a natural incapacity of offending, as not being a moral agent, appears to have a claim, in natural right, upon exemption from such pains and

sufferings, as would render existence a worse condition than never to have been called out of nothing. For, as a benevolent being, which God is acknowledged to be, cannot make a creature with such an intention and contrivance, that, by its very constitution, it must necessarily be wholly miserable; and we see in this, that his sovereignty is regulated by his goodness as to the commencement of the existence of sentient creatures; so, from the moment they begin to be, the government of God

over them commences, and sovereignty in government necessarily grounds itself upon the principles of equity and justice, and "the Judge of the whole earth" must and will "do right."

This is the manifest doctrine of Scripture; for, although Almighty God often gives "no account of his matters," nor, in some instances, admits us to know how he is both just and gracious in his administration, yet are we referred constantly to those general declarations of his own word, which assure us

that he is so, that we may "walk by faith," and wait for that period, when, after the faith and patience of good men have been sufficiently tried, the manifestation of these facts shall take place to our comfort and to his glory. In many respects, so far as we are concerned, we see no other reason for his proceedings, than that he so wills to act. But the error into which our brethren often fall, is to conclude, from their want of information in such cases, that God acts merely because he wills so to act;

that because he gives not those reasons for his conduct which we have no right to demand, he acts without any reasons at all; and because we are not admitted to the secrets of his council chamber, that his government is perfectly arbitrary, and that the main spring of his leading dispensations is to make a show of power: a conclusion which implies a most unworthy notion of God, which he has himself contradicted in the most explicit manner.

Even his most mysterious proceedings are called "judgments;" and he is said to work all things

"according to the counsel of his own will," a collation of words, which sufficiently show that not blind will, but will subject to "counsel" is that sovereign will which governs the world.

"Whenever, therefore, God acts as a governor, as a rewarder, or punisher, he no longer acts as a mere sovereign, by his own sole will and pleasure, but as an impartial judge, guided in

all things by invariable justice.

"Yet it is true, that in some cases, mercy rejoices over justice, although severity never does. God may reward more, but he will never punish more than strict justice requires. It may be allowed, that God acts as sovereign in convincing some souls of sin, arresting them in their mad career by his resistless power. It seems also, that, at the moment of our conversion, he acts irresistibly.

There may likewise be many irresistible touches in the course of our Christian warfare; but still, as St. Paul might have been either obedient or 'disobedient to the heavenly vision,' so every individual may, after all that God has done, either improve his grace, or make it of none effect.

"Whatever, therefore, it has pleased God to do, of his sovereign pleasure, as Creator of heaven and earth; and whatever his mercy may do on particular occasions, over and above

what justice requires, the general rule stands firm as the pillars of heaven. ' The Judge of all the earth will do right:' 'he will judge the world in righteousness,' and every man therein, according to the strictest justice. He will punish no man for doing any thing which he could not possibly avoid; neither for omitting any thing which he could not possibly do. Every punishment supposes the offender might have avoided the offence for which he is punished, otherwise to punish him would be palpably unjust,

and inconsistent with the character of God our governor." (Wesley's Works, vol.

vi, p. 136.)

The case of heathen nations has sometimes been referred to by Calvinists, as presenting equal difficulties to those urged against their scheme of election and reprobation. But the cases are not at all parallel, nor can they be made so, unless it could be proved that heathens,' as such, are inevitably excluded from the kingdom of heaven;

which is not, as some of them seem to suppose, a conceded point. Those, indeed, if there be any such, who, believing in the universal redemption of mankind, should allow this, would be most inconsistent with them selves, and give up many of those principles on which they successfully contend against the doctrine of absolute reprobation; but the argument lies in small compass, and is to be determined by the word of God, and not by the speculations of men. The actual state of pagan

nations is affectingly bad; but nothing can be deduced from what they are in fact against their salvability; for although there is no ground to hope for the salvation of great numbers of them, actual salvation is one thing, and possible salvation is another. Nor does it affect this question, if we see not how heathens may be saved; that is, by what means repentance, and faith, and righteousness, should be in any such degree wrought in them, as that they shall become acceptable to God. The dispensation of

religion under which all those nations are to whom the Gospel has never been sent, continues to be the patriarchal dispensation. That men were saved under that in former times we know, and at what point, if any, a religion becomes so far corrupted, and truth so far extinct, as to leave no means of salvation to men, nothing to call forth a true faith in principle, and obedience to what remains known or knowable of the original law, no one has the right to determine, unless he can adduce some authority from Scripture.

That authority is certainly not available to the conclusion, that, in point of fact, the means of salvation are utterly withdrawn from heathens. We may say that a murderous, adulterous, and idolatrous heathen will be shut out from the kingdom of heaven; we must say this, on the express exclusion of all such characters from future blessedness by the word of God; but it would be little to the purpose to say, that, as far as we know, all of them are wicked and idolatrous, As far as we know they may, but we do

not know the whole case; and, were these charges universally true, yet the question is not what the heathen are, but what they have the means of becoming. We indeed know that all are not equally vicious, nay, that some virtuous heathens have been found in all ages; and some earnest and anxious inquirers after truth, dissatisfied with the notions prevalent in their own countries respectively; and what these few were, the rest might have been likewise. But, if we knew no such instances of superior

virtue and eager desire of religious information among them, the true question, "what degree of truth is, after all, attainable by them 1" would still remain a question which must be determined not so much by our knowledge of facts which may be very obscure; but such principles and general declarations as we find applicable to the case in the word of God.

If all knowledge of right and wrong, and all gracious influence of the Holy Spirit, and all objects of faith,

have passed away from the heathen, through the fault of their ancestors "not liking to retain God in their knowledge," and without the present race having been parties to this, willful abandonment of truth, then they would appear no longer to be accountable creatures, being neither under law nor under grace; but, as we find it a doctrine of Scripture that all men are responsible to God, and that the "whole world" will be judged at the last day, we are bound to admit the accountability of all, and with that, the remains of

law and the existence of a merciful government toward the heathen on the part of God. With this the doctrine of St. Paul accords. No one can take stronger views of the actual danger and the corrupt state of the Gentiles than he; yet he affirms that the Divine law had not perished wholly from among them; that though they had received no revealed law, yet they had a law "written on their hearts;" meaning, no doubt, the traditionary law, the equity of which their consciences attested; and,

farther, that though they had not the written law, yet, that "by nature," that is, "without an outward rule, though this, also, strictly speaking, is by preventing grace," (Wesley's Notes, in loc.) they were capable of doing all the things contained in the law. He affirms, too, that all such Gentiles as were thus obedient, should be "justified, in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men, by Jesus Christ, according to his Gospel." The possible obedience and the possible "justification" of heathens

who have no written revelation, are points, therefore, distinctly affirmed by the apostle in his discourse in the second chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, and the whole matter of God's sovereignty, as to the heathen, is reduced, not to the leaving of any portion of our race without the means of salvation, and then punishing them for sins which they have no means of avoiding; but to the fact of his having given superior advantages to us, and inferior ones only to them; a proceeding which

we see exemplified in the most enlightened of Christian nations every day; for neither every part of the same nation is equally favored with the means of grace, nor are all the families living in the same town and neighborhood equally circumstanced as to means of religious influence and improvement. The principle of this inequality is, however, far different from that on which Calvinistic reprobation is sustained; since it involves no inevitable exclusion of any individual from the

kingdom of God, and because the general principle of God's administration in such cases is elsewhere laid down to be, the requiring of much where much is given, and the requiring of little where little is given:- a principle of the strictest equity.

An unguarded opinion as to the irresistibility of grace, and the passiveness of man in conversion, has also been assumed, and made to give an air of plausibility to the predestinarian scheme. It

is argued, if our salvation is of God and not of ourselves, then those only can be saved to whom God gives the grace of conversion; and the rest, not having this grace afforded them, are, by the inscrutable counsel of God, passed by, and reprobated.

This is an argument a posteriori; from the assumed passiveness of man in conversion to the election of a part only of mankind to life. The argument a priori is from partial election to life to the doctrine of irresistible

grace, as the means by which the Divine decree is carried into effect, The doctrine of such an election has already been refuted, and it will be easy to show that it derives no support from the assumption that grace must work irresistibly in man, in order that the honor of our salvation may be secured to God, which is the plausible dress in which the doctrine is generally presented.

It is allowed, and all Scriptural advocates of the universal redemption of mankind will join with the

Calvinists in maintaining the doctrine, that every disposition and inclination to good which originally existed in the nature of man is lost by the fall; that all men, in their simply natural state, are "dead in trespasses and sin's," and have neither the will nor the power to turn to God; and that no one is sufficient of himself to think or do any thing of a saving tendency. But, as all men are required to do those things which have a saving tendency, we contend, that the grace to do them has been bestowed

upon all. Equally sacred is the doctrine to be held, that no person can repent or truly believe except under the influence of the Spirit of GOD; and that we have no ground of boasting in ourselves, but that all the glory of our salvation, commenced and consummated, is to be given to God alone, as the result of the freeness and riches of his grace.

It will also be freely allowed, that the visitations of the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit are vouchsafed in the first

instance, and in numberless other subsequent cases, quite independent of our seeking them or desire for them; and that when our thoughts are thus turned to serious considerations, and various exciting and quickened feelings are produced within us, we are often wholly passive; and also, that men are sometimes suddenly and irresistibly awakened to a sense of their guilt and danger by the Spirit of God, either through the preaching of the word instrumentally, or through

other means, and sometimes, even, independent of any external means at all; and are thus constrained to cry out, "What must I do to be saved?" All this is confirmed by plain verity of Holy Writ; and is, also, as certain a matter of experience as that the motions of the Holy Spirit do often silently intermingle themselves with our thoughts, reasonings, and consciences, and breathe their milder persuasions upon our affections.

From these premises the conclusions which legitimately flow, are in direct opposition to the Calvinistic hypothesis. They establish,

1. The justice of God in the condemnation of men, which their doc. trine leaves under a dark and impenetrable cloud. More or less of these influences from on high visit the finally impenitent, so as to render their destruction their own act by resisting them. This is proved, from the "Spirit"

having "strove" with those who were finally destroyed by the flood of Noah; from the case of the finally impenitent Jews and their ancestors, who are charged with "always resisting the Holy Ghost;" from the case of the apostates mentioned in the Epistle to the Hebrews, who are said to have done "despite to the Spirit of grace;" and from the solemn warnings given to men in the New Testament, not to "grieve" and "quench" the Holy Spirit. If, therefore, it appears that the destruction of men is

attributed to their resistance of those influences of the Holy Spirit, which, but for that resistance, would have been saving, according to the design of God in imparting them, then is the justice of God manifested in their punishment; and it follows, also, that his grace so works in men, as to be both sufficient to lead them into a state of salvation, and even actually to place them in this state, and yet so as to be capable of being finally and fatally frustrated.

2. These premises, also, secure the glory of our salvation to the grace of God; but not by implying the Calvinistic notion of the continued and uninterrupted irresistibility of the influence of grace and the passiveness of man, so as to deprive him of his agency; but by showing that his agency, even when rightly directed, is upheld and influenced by the superior power of God, and yet so as to be still his own. For, in the instance of the mightiest visitation we can produce from Scripture, that of St. Paul,

we see where the irresistible influence terminated, and where his own agency recommenced. Under the impulse of the conviction struck into his mind, as well as under the dazzling brightness which fell upon his eyes, he was passive, and the effect produced for the time necessarily followed; but all the actions consequent upon this were the results of deliberation and personal choice. He submits to be taught in the doctrine of Christ; "he confers not with flesh and blood;" "he is not

disobedient to the heavenly vision;" "he faints not" under the burdensome ministry he had received; and he "keeps his body under subjection, lest, after having preached to others, he should himself become a castaway." All these expressions, so descriptive of consideration and choice, show that the irresistible impulse was not permanent, and that he was subsequently left to improve it or not, though under a powerful but still a resistible motive operating upon him to remain faithful.

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49 REDEMPTION - FARTHER BENEFITS

Having endeavored to establish the doctrine of the universal redemption of the human race, the enumeration of the leading blessings which flow from it may now be resumed. We have already spoken of justification, adoption, regeneration, and the witness of the Holy Spirit, and we proceed to another as distinctly marked, and as graciously promised in

the Holy Scriptures: this is the entire sanctification, or the perfected holiness of believers; and as this doctrine, in some of its respects, has been the subject of controversy, the Scriptural evidence of it must be appealed to and examined. Happily for us, a subject of so great importance is riot involved in obscurity.

That, a distinction exists between a regenerate state and a state of entire and perfect holiness will be generally allowed. Regeneration, we have

seen, is concomitant with justification; but the apostles, in addressing the body of believers in the Churches to whom they wrote their epistles, set before them, both in the prayers they offer in their behalf, and in the exhortations they administer, a still higher degree of deliverance from sin, as well as a higher growth in Christian virtues. Two passages only need be quoted to prove this:- 1 Thess. 5:23, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and I pray God your whole spirit and soul

and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 2 Cor. 7:1, "Having these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." In both these passages deliverance from sin is the subject spoken of; and the prayer in one instance, and the exhortation in the other, goes to the extent of the entire sanctification of "the soul" and "spirit," as well as of the "flesh" or "body," from all sin; by which can

only be meant our complete deliverance from all spiritual pollution, all inward depravation of the heart, as well as that which, expressing itself outwardly by the indulgence of the senses, is called "filthiness of the flesh."

The attainableness of such a state is not so much a matter of debate among Christians as the time when we are authorized to expect it. For us it is an axiom of Christian doctrine, that "without holiness no man can see the Lord;" and is equally

clear that if we would "be found of him in peace," we must be found "without spot and blameless;" and that the Church will be presented by Christ to the Father without "fault;" so it must be concluded, unless, on the one hand, we greatly pervert the sense of these passages, or, on the other, admit the doctrine of purgatory or some intermediate purifying institution, that the entire sanctification of the soul, and its complete renewal in holiness, must take place in this world.

While this is generally acknowledged, however, among spiritual Christians, it has been warmly contended by many, that the final stroke which destroys our natural corruption, is only given at death; and that the soul, when separated from the body, and not before, is capable of that immaculate purity which these passages, doubtless, exhibit to our hope.

If this view can be refuted, then it must follow, unless a purgatory of some description be allowed

after death, that the entire sanctification of believers, at any time previous to their dissolution, and in the full sense of these evangelic promises, is attainable.

To the opinion in question, then, there appear to be the following fatal objections:-

1. That we nowhere find the promises of entire sanctification restricted to the article of death, either expressly, or in fair inference from any passage of Holy Scripture.

2. That we nowhere find the circumstance of the

soul's union with the body represented as a necessary obstacle to its entire sanctification.

The principal passage which has been urged in proof of this from the New Testament, is that part of the seventh chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, in which St. Paul, speaking in the first person of the bondage of the flesh, has been supposed to describe his state, as a believer in Christ. But whether he speaks of himself, or describes the state of others in a supposed case,

given for the sake of more vivid representation in the first person, which is much more probable, he is clearly speaking of a person who had once sought justification by the works of the law, but who was then convinced, by the force of a spiritual apprehension of the extent of the requirements of that law, and by constant, failures in his attempts to keep it perfectly, that he was in bondage to his corrupt nature, and could only be delivered from this thralldom by the interposition of another.

For, not to urge that his strong expressions of being "carnal," "sold under sin," and doing always "the things which he would not," are utterly inconsistent with that moral state of believers in Christ which he describes in the next chapter; and, especially, that he there declares that such as are in Christ Jesus "walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit;" the seventh chapter itself contains decisive evidence against the inference which the advocates of the necessary continuance of sin till

death have drawn from it. The apostle declares the person whose case he describes, to be under the law, and not in a state of deliverance by Christ; and then he represents him not only as despairing of self deliverance, and as praying for the interposition of a sufficiently powerful deliverer, but as thanking God that the very deliverance for which he groans is appointed to be administered to him by Jesus Christ. "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God

through Jesus Christ our Lord."

This is, also, so fully confirmed by what the apostle had said in the preceding chapter, where he unquestionably describes the moral state of true believers, that nothing is more surprising than that so perverted a comment upon the seventh chapter, as that to which we have adverted, should have been adopted or persevered in. "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid!

How shall we, who are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death?

Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection;

knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin; for he that is dead is freed from sin." So clearly does the apostle show that he who is bound to the "body of death," as mentioned in the seventh chapter, is not in the state of a believer; and that he who has a true faith in Christ, "is freed from sin."

It is somewhat singular, that the divines of the Calvinistic school should be almost uniformly the

zealous advocates of the doctrine of the continuance of indwelling sin till death; but it is but justice to say, that several of them have as zealously denied that the apostle, in the seventh chapter of the Romans, describes the state of one who is justified by faith in Christ, and very properly consider the case there spoken of as that of one struggling in legal bondage, and brought to that point of self despair and of conviction of sin and helplessness which must always precede an entire trust in the merits of

Christ's death, and the power of his salvation.

3. The doctrine before us is disproved by those passages of Scripture which connect our entire sanctification with subsequent habits and acts, to be exhibited in the conduct of believers before death. So in the quotation from Rom. 6, just given, - "knowing this, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." So the exhortation in 2 Cor. 7:1, also given above, refers to the present life, and not

to the future hour of our dissolution; and in 1

Thess. 5:23, the apostle first prays for the entire sanctification of the Thessalonians, and then for their preservation in that hallowed state, "unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

4. It is disproved, also, by all those passages which require us to bring forth those graces and virtues which are usually called the fruits of the Spirit. That these are to be produced during our life, and to be displayed in our spirit and

conduct, cannot be doubted; and we may then ask whether they are required of us in perfection and maturity? If so, in this degree of maturity and perfection, they necessarily suppose the entire sanctification of the soul from the opposite and antagonist evils. Meekness in its perfection supposes the extinction of all sinful anger; perfect love to God, supposes that no affection remains contrary to it; and so of every other perfect internal virtue. The inquiry, then, is reduced to this, whether these graces,

in such perfection as to exclude the opposite corruptions of the heart, are of possible attainment. If they are not, then we cannot love God with our whole hearts; then we must be sometimes sinfully angry; and how, in that case, are we to interpret that perfectness in these graces which God hath required of us, and promised to us in the Gospel? For if the perfection meant (and let it be observed that this is a Scriptural term, and must mean something) be so comparative as that we

may be sometimes sinfully angry, and may sometimes divide our hearts between God and the creature, we may apply the same comparative sense of the term to good words and to good works, as well as to good affections. Thus when the apostle prays for the Hebrews, "Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work, to do his will," we must understand this perfection

of evangelical good works so that it shall sometimes give place to opposite evil works, just as good affections must necessarily sometimes give place to the opposite bad affections. This view can scarcely be soberly entertained by any enlightened Christian; and it must, therefore, be concluded, that the standard of our attainable Christian perfection, as to the affections, is a love of God so perfect as to "rule the heart," and exclude all rivalry, and a meekness so perfect as to cast out all sinful anger, and prevent

its return; and that as to good works, the rule is, that we shall be so "perfect in every good work," as to "do the will of God" habitually, fully, and constantly. If we fix the standard lower, we let in a license totally inconsistent with that Christian purity which is allowed by all to be attainable, and we make every man himself his own interpreter of that comparative perfection which is often contended for as that only which is attainable.

Some, it is true, admit the extent of the promises and the requirements of the Gospel as we have stated them; but they contend, that this is the mark at which we are to aim, the standard toward which we are to aspire, though neither is attainable fully till death. But this view cannot be true as applied to sanctification, or deliverance from all inward and outward sin. That the degree of every virtue implanted by grace is not limited, but advances and grows in the living Christian throughout life,

may be granted; and through eternity also: but to say that these virtues are not attainable, through the work of the Spirit, in that degree which shall destroy all opposite vice, is to say, that God, under the Gospel, requires us to be what we cannot be, either through want of efficacy in his grace, or from some defect in its administration; neither of which has any countenance from Scripture, nor is at all consistent with the terms in which the promises and exhortations of the Gospel are expressed. It is also

contradicted by our own consciousness, which charges our criminal neglects and failures upon ourselves, and not upon the grace of God, as though it were insufficient, Either the consciences of good men have in all ages been delusive and over scrupulous; or this doctrine of the necessary, though occasional, dominion of sin over us is false.

5. The doctrine of the necessary indwelling of sin in the soul till death involves other antiscriptural

consequences. It supposes that the seat of sin is in the flesh, and thus harmonizes with the pagan philosophy, which attributed all evil to matter. The doctrine of the Bible, on the contrary, is, that the seat of sin is in the soul; and it makes it one of the proofs of the fall and corruption of our spiritual nature, that we are in bondage to the appetites and motions of the flesh. Nor does the theory which places the necessity of sinning in the connection of the soul with the body account for the whole moral case of man. There

are sins, as pride, covetousness, malice, and others, which are wholly spiritual; and yet no exception is made in this doctrine of the necessary continuance of sin till death as to them. There is, surely, no need to wait for the separation of the soul from the body in order to be saved from evils which are the sole offspring of the spirit; and yet these are made as inevitable as the sins which more immediately connect themselves with the excitements of the animal nature.

This doctrine supposes, too, that the flesh must necessarily not only lust against the Spirit, but in no small degree, and on many occasions, be the conqueror: whereas, we are commanded, to

"mortify the deeds of the body;" to "crucify" that is, to put to death, "the flesh;" "to put off the old man," which, in its full meaning, must import separation from sin in fact, as well as the renunciation of it in will; and "to put on the new man." Finally, the apostle expressly states, that

though the flesh stands victoriously opposed to legal sanctification, it is not insuperable by evangelical holiness. - "For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," Rom. 8:3, 4. So inconsistent with the declarations and promises of the Gospel is the notion that, so long as we are in

the body, "the flesh" must of necessity have at least the occasional dominion.

We conclude, therefore, as to the time of our complete sanctification, or, to use the phrase of the Apostle Paul, "the destruction of the body of sin;" that it can neither be referred to the hour of death, nor placed subsequently to this present life. The attainment of perfect freedom from sin is one to which believers are called during the present life; and is necessary to that completeness of

"holiness," and of those active and passive graces of Christianity by which they are called to glorify God in this world, and to edify mankind.

Not only the time, but the manner also, of our sanctification has been matter of controversy: some contending that all attainable degrees of it are acquired by the process of gradual mortification and the acquisition of holy habits; others alleging it to be instantaneous, and the fruit of an act of faith in the Divine promises.

That the regeneration which accompanies justification is a large approach to this state of perfected holiness; and that all dying to sin, and all growth in grace, advances us nearer to this point of entire sanctity, is so obvious, that on these points there can be no reasonable dispute.

But they are not at all inconsistent with a more instantaneous work, when, the depth of our natural depravity being more painfully felt, we plead in faith the accomplishment

of the promises of God. The great question to be settled is, whether the deliverance sighed after be held out to us in these promises as a present blessing? And, from what has been already said, there appears no ground to doubt this, since no small violence would be offered to the passages of Scripture already quoted, as well as to many others, by the opposite opinion. All the promises of GOD, which are not expressly, or from their order, referred to future time, are objects of present trust; and their fulfillment now is made

conditional only upon our faith. They cannot, therefore, be pleaded in our prayers, with an entire reliance upon the truth of God, in vain. The general promise that we shall receive "all things whatsoever we ask in prayer, believing," comprehends, of course, "all things" suited to our case which God has engaged to bestow; and if the entire renewal of our nature be included in the number, without any limitation of time, except that in which we ask it in faith, then to this faith shall

the promises of entire sanctification be given; which, in the nature of the case, supposes an instantaneous work immediately following upon our entire and unwavering faith.

The only plausible objections made to this doctrine may be answered in few words.

It has been urged, that this state of entire sanctification supposes future impeccability. Certainly not; for if angels and our first parents fell when in a state of

immaculate sanctity, the renovated man cannot be placed, by his entire deliverance from inward sin, out of the reach of danger. This, remark, also, answers the allegation, that we should thus be removed out of the reach of temptation; for the example of angels, and of the first man, who fell by temptation when in a state of native purity, proves that the absence of inward evil is not inconsistent with a state of probation; and that this, in itself, is no guard against the attempts and solicitations of evil.

It has been objected, too, that this supposed state renders the atonement and intercession of Christ superfluous in future. But the very contrary of this is manifest when the case of an evangelical renewal of the soul in righteousness is understood. This proceeds from the grace of God in Christ, through the Holy Spirit, as the efficient cause; it is received by faith as the instrumental cause; and the state itself into which we are raised is maintained, not by inherent native power, but by the continual presence

and sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit himself, received and retained in answer to ceaseless prayer; which prayer has respect solely to the merits of the death and intercession of Christ.

It has been farther alleged, that a person delivered from all inward and outward sin has no longer need to use the petition of the Lord's prayer, - "and forgive us our trespasses;" because he has no longer need of pardon. To this we reply, 1. That it would be absurd to suppose that any

person is placed under the necessity of "trespassing," in order that a general prayer designed for men in a mixed condition might retain its aptness to every particular case. 2. That trespassing of every kind and degree is not supposed by this prayer to be continued, in order that it might be used always in the same import, or otherwise it might be pleaded against the renunciation of any trespass or transgression whatever. 3. That this petition is still relevant to the case of the entirely sanctified and the

evangelically perfect, since neither the perfection of the first man nor that of angels is in question; that is, a perfection measured by the perfect law, which, in its obligations, contemplates all creatures as having sustained no injury by moral lapse, and admits, therefore, of no excuse from infirmities and mistakes of judgment; nor of any degree of obedience below that which beings created naturally perfect, were capable of rendering. There may, however, be an entire sanctification of a being rendered naturally

weak and imperfect, and so liable to mistake and infirmity, as well as to defect in the degree of that absolute obedience and service which the law of God, never bent or lowered to human weakness, demands from all. These defects, and mistakes, and infirmities, may be quite consistent with the entire sanctification of the soul and the moral maturity of a being still naturally infirm and imperfect. Still, farther, if this were not a sufficient answer it may be remarked, that we are not the ultimate judges of our

own case as to our "trespasses," or our exemption from them; and we are not, therefore, to put ourselves into the place of God, "who is greater than our hearts." So, although St. Paul says, "I know nothing by myself," that is, I am conscious of no offence, he adds, "yet am I not hereby justified; but he that judgeth me is the Lord;" to whom, therefore, the appeal is every moment to be made through Christ the Mediator, and who, by the renewed testimony of his Spirit, assures every true

believer of his acceptance in his sight.

Another benefit which accrues to all true believers, is the Right to pray, with the special assurance that they shall be heard in all things which are according to the will of God. "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us." It is under this gracious institution that all good men are constituted intercessors for others, even for the whole world; and that God is

pleased to order many of his dispensations, both as to individuals and to nations, in reference to "his elect who cry day and night unto him."

With respect to every real member of the body or Church of Christ, the providence of God is special; in other words, they are individually considered in the administration of the affairs of this life by the Sovereign Ruler, and their measure of good and of evil is appointed with constant reference to their

advantage, either in this life or in eternity. "The hairs of their head," are, therefore, said to be "numbered," and "all things" are declared "to work together for their good."

To them also victory over death is awarded. They are freed from its fear in respect of consequences in another state; for the apprehension of future punishment is removed by the remission of their sins, and the attestation of this to their minds by the Holy Spirit, while a patient

resignation to the will of God, as to the measure of their bodily sufferings, and the strong hopes and joyful anticipations of a better life cancel and subdue that horror of pain and dissolution which is natural to man. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their

life time subject to bondage," Heb. 2:14, 15.

The immediate reception of the soul into a state of blessedness after death, is also another of the glorious promises of the new covenant to all them that endure to the end, and "die in the Lord."

This is so explicitly taught in the New Testament, that, but for the admission of a philosophical error, it would, probably, have never been doubted by any persons professing to receive that book, as of Divine authority. Till, in

recent times, the belief in the materiality of the human soul was chiefly confined to those who entirely rejected the Christian revelation; but, when the Socinians adopted this notion, without wholly rejecting the Scriptures, it was promptly perceived that the doctrine of an intermediate state, and the materiality of the soul, could not be maintained together; (4) and the most violent and disgraceful criticisms and evasions have, therefore, by this class of interpreters been

resorted to, in order to save a notion as unphilosophical as it is contrary to the word of God. Nothing can be more satisfactory than the observations of Dr. Campbell on this subject.

(4) A few divines, and but few, have also been found, who, still admitting the essential distinction between body and spirit, have thought that their separation by death incapacitated the soul for the exercise of its powers. This suspension they call "the sleep of the soul" With the Materialist death

causes the entire annihilation, for the time, of the thinking property of matter.

Both opinions are, however, refuted by the same Scriptural arguments

"Many expressions of Scripture, in the natural and obvious sense, imply that an intermediate and separate state of the soul is actually to succeed death. Such are the words of the Lord to the penitent thief upon the cross, Luke 23:43. Stephen's dying petition, Acts 7:59. The comparisons which the Apostle Paul

makes in different places, (2 Cor. 5:6, &c; Phil. 1:21,) between the enjoyment which true Christians can attain by their continuance in this world, and that which they enter on at their departure out of it, and several other passages. Let the words referred to be read by any judicious person, either in the original or in the common translation, which is sufficiently exact for this purpose, and let him, setting aside all theory or system, say, candidly, whether they would not be understood, by the gross of

mankind, as presupposing that the soul may and will exist separately from the body, and be susceptible of happiness or misery in that state. If any thing could add to the native evidence of the expressions, it would be the unnatural meanings that are put upon them, in order to disguise that evidence. What shall we say of the metaphysical distinction introduced for this purpose between absolute and relative time? The Apostle Paul, they are sensible, speaks of the saints as admitted to enjoyment in the presence

of God, immediately after death. Now, to palliate the direct contradiction there is in this to their doctrine, that the vital principle, which is all they mean by the soul, remains extinguished between death and the resurrection, they remind us of the difference there is between absolute or real and relative or apparent time. They admit, that if the apostle be understood as speaking of real time, what is said flatly contradicts their system; but, say they, his words must be interpreted as spoken only

of apparent time. He talks, indeed, of entering on a state of enjoyment immediately after death, though there may be many thousands of years between the one and the other; for he means only, that when that state shall commence, however distant, in reality, the time may be, the person entering upon it will not be sensible of that distance, and, consequently, there will be to him an apparent coincidence with the moment of his death. But does the apostle any where give a hint that this is his

meaning? or is it what any man would naturally discover from his words? That it is exceedingly remote from the common use of language, I believe hardly any of those, who favor this scheme, will be partial enough to deny. Did the sacred penmen then mean to put a cheat upon the world, and, by the help of an equivocal expression, to flatter men with the hope of entering, the instant they expire, on a state of felicity, when, in fact, they knew that it would be many ages before it would take place? But

were the hypothesis about the extinction of the mind between death and the resurrection well founded, the apparent coincidence they speak of is not so clear as they seem to think it. For my part, I cannot regard it as an axiom, and I never heard of any who attempted to demonstrate it. To me it appears merely a corollary from Mr. Locke's doctrine, which derives our conceptions of time from the succession of our ideas, which, whether true or false, is a doctrine to be found only among certain philosophers, and

which, we may reasonably believe, never came into the heads of those to whom the Gospel, in the apostolic age, was announced.

"I remark that even the curious equivocations (or, perhaps, more properly, mental reservation) that has been devised for them, will not, in every case, save the credit of apostolical veracity.

The words of Paul to the Corinthians are, Knowing that while we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord; again, we are willing rather to be

absent from the body and present with the Lord. Could such expressions have been used by him, if he had held it impossible to be with the Lord, or, indeed, any where, without the body; and that, whatever the change was which was made by death, he could not be in the presence of the Lord, till he returned to the body? Absence from the body, and presence with the Lord, were never, therefore, more unfortunately combined than in this illustration. Things are combined here

as coincident, which, on the hypothesis of those gentlemen, are incompatible. If recourse be had to the original, the expressions in Greek are, if possible, still stronger. They are hoi endhmountes to osmati, those who dwell in the body, who are ekdhmauntes apo tau Kurieuo, at a distance from the Lord, As, on the contrary, they are hoi endhmauntess ek tau osmatos, those who have travelled out of the body, who are hoi endhmauntes psos ton Kurieuo, those who reside, or are present

with the Lord, In the passage to the Philippians, also, the commencement of his presence with the Lord is represented as coincident, not with his return to the body, but with his leaving it; with the dissolution, not with the restoration of the union.

"From the tenor of the New Testament, the sacred writers appear to proceed on the supposition that the soul and the body are naturally distinct and separable, and that the soul is susceptible of pain or pleasure in a state of

separation. It were endless to enumerate all the places which evince this. The story of the rich man and Lazarus, Luke 16:22, 23. The last words of our Lord upon the cross, Luke 23:46, and of Stephen, when dying. Paul's doubts, whether he was in the body or out of the body, when he was translated to the third heaven and paradise, 2 Cor. 12:2, 3, 4. Our Lord's words to Thomas to satisfy him that he was not a spirit, Luke 24:39. And, to conclude, the express mention of the denial of spirits as one of the errors

of the Sadducees. Acts 23:8, For the Sadducees say there is no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit, mede aggelon mede pneuma. All these are irrefragable evidences of the general opinion on this subject of both Jews and Christians. By spirit, as distinguished from angel, is evidently meant the departed spirit of a human being; for, that man is here, before his natural death, possessed of a vital and intelligent principle, which is commonly called his soul or spirit, it was never pretended that they denied."

(Diss. vi, part 2.)

In this intermediate, but felicitous and glorious state, the disembodied spirits of the righteous will remain in joy and felicity with Christ, until the general judgment; when another display of the gracious effects of our redemption, by Christ, will appear in the glorious resurrection of their bodies to an immortal life: thus distinguishing them from the wicked, whose resurrection will be to "shame and everlasting contempt," or, to what may

be emphatically termed, an immortal death.

On this subject no point of discussion, of any importance, arises among those who admit the truth of Scripture, except as to the way in which the doctrine of the resurrection of the body is to be understood;- whether a resurrection of the substance of the body be meant, or of some minute and indestructible part of it. The latter theory has been adopted for the sake of avoiding certain supposed difficulties. It

cannot, however, fail to strike every impartial reader of the New Testament, that the doctrine of the resurrection is there taught without any nice distinctions. It is always exhibited as a miraculous work; and represents the same body which is laid in the grave as the subject of this change from death to life, by the power of Christ. Thus, our Lord was raised in the same body in which he died, and his resurrection is constantly held forth as the model of ours; and the Apostle Paul expressly

says, "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." The only passage of Scripture which appears to favor the notion of the rising of the immortal body from some indestructible germ, is 1 Cor. 15:35, &c,

"But some man will say, How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die; and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but

bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain," &c. If, however, it had been the intention of the apostle, holding this view of the case, to meet objections to the doctrine of the resurrection, grounded upon the difficulties of conceiving how the same body, in the popular sense, could be raised up in substance, we might have expected him to correct this misapprehension, by declaring that this was not the Christian doctrine; but that some small parts of the body only, bearing as

little proportion to the whole as the germ of a seed to the plant, would be preserved, and be unfolded into the perfected body at the resurrection. Instead of this, he goes on immediately to remind the objector of the differences which exist between material bodies as they now exist; between the plant and the bare or naked grain; between one plant and another; between the flesh of men, of beasts, of fishes, and of birds; between celestial and terrestrial bodies; and between the lesser and

greater celestial luminaries themselves. Still farther he proceeds to state the difference, not between the germ of the body to be raised, and the body given at the resurrection; but between the body itself, understood popularly, which dies, and the body which shall be raised. "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption," which would not be true of the supposed incorruptible and imperishable germ of this hypothesis; and can only be affirmed of the body itself, considered in substance, and in its

present state corruptible. Farther, the question put by the objector, "How are the dead raised up?"

does not refer to the modus agendi of the resurrection, or the process or manner in which the thing is to be effected, as the advocates of the germ hypothesis appear to assume. - This is manifest from the answer of the apostle, who goes on immediately to state, not in what manner the resurrection is to be effected, but what shall be the state or condition of the resurrection body, which is

no answer at all to the question, if it be taken in that sense.

The first of the two questions in the passage referred to relates to the possibility of the resurrection, "How are the dead raised up?" The second to the kind of body which they are to take, supposing the fact to be allowed. Both questions, however, imply a denial of the fact, or, at least, express a strong doubt concerning it. It is thus that pos, "how" in the first question, is taken in many

passages where it is connected with a verb; (5) and the second question only expresses the general negation or doubt more particularly, by implying, that the objector could not conceive of any kind of body being restored to man, which would not be an evil and imperfection to him. For the very reason why some of the Christians of that age denied, or strongly doubted, the resurrection of the body; explaining it figuratively, and saying that it was past already; was, that they were influenced to this by

the notion of their philosophical schools, that the body was the prison of the soul, and that the greatest deliverance men could experience was to be eternally freed from their connection with matter. Hence the early philosophizing sects in the Christian Church, the Gnostics, Marcionites, &c, denied the resurrection, on the same ground as the philosophers, and thought it opposed to that perfection which they hoped to enjoy in another world. Such persons appear to have been in the

Church of Corinth as early as the time of St. Paul, for that in this chapter he answers the objections, not of pagans, but of professing Christians, appears from verse 12, "How say some among you, that there is no resurrection of the dead?" The objection, therefore, in the minds of these persons to the doctrine of the resurrection, did not lie against the doctrine of the raising up of the substance of the same body, so that, provided this notion could be dispensed with, they were prepared to admit, that a new material body

might spring from its germ, as a plant from seed. -

(5) Gen. 39:9, Pos poimos, How shall I, - how is it possible that I should do this great wickedness? "How, then, can I," say our translators. Exod. 6:12, "Behold, the children of Israel have not hearkened unto me; how, then, shall Pharaoh hear me?" - pos eisakonsetai mon pharas;- how is it likely, or possible, that Pharaoh should hear me? See also verse 30. Judges 16:15, "And she said unto him, Pos legeis, How canst thou say I love thee?"

2 Sam. 11:11, may also be considered in the LXX. 2 Kings 10:4, "But they were exceedingly afraid, and said, Behold, two kings stood not before him: kai pos, how then shall we stand?" - how is it possible that we should stand Job 9:2, Pos gar estai dikaios Brotos;- For how shall mortal man be just with, or in the presence of God? - how is it possible? See what follows. Psalm 72:11; Pos egns ho Theos; "How doth God know?" - how is it possible that he should know? See the connection.

Jer. 8:8; Pos ereite, "How do ye say," - how is that ye say, - how can ye say, We are wise? Ibid, 24:7, (47:7,) Pos honchasei; "How can it," - the sword of the lord, - "be quiet?" Ezek. 33:10, "If our transgressions and our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them, Pos zhsometha how should we then live?" Matt. 7:4, "Or how, pos, wilt thou say to thy brother?" where Rosenm observes that pos has the force of negation. Ibid 12:26, "If Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; pos oun zathmsetai how shall then,"

- how can then, - "his kingdom stand?"

See also Luke 11:18 Ibid. 23:33, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, pos phughte, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" "qui fieri potest?" Rosenm. Mark 4:40. pos auk exete pistin;

"How is it that ye have no faith?" Luke 1:34, may also be adduced. John 5:47, "If ye believe not his writings, pos__pistensete; how shall ye," - how can ye - "believe my words?" Rom. 3:6,

"God forbid for then, pos krinei, how shall God judge the world?" - how is it possible? See the preceding verse. Ibid. 8:32, Pos__charisetai; "How shall he not," - - how is it possible but that he should, - "with him also freely give us all things." Ibid. 10:14, pos-epikalesontai, "How then shall they," - how is it possible that they should, - "call on him in whom they have not believed?" &c, 1 Tim. 3:5, "For if a man know not how to rule his own house, pos, how shall he take care of the Church of God?" Heb. 2:3, "How

shall we escape," - how is it possible that we should escape, - "if we neglect so great salvation?" 1 John 3:17, Pos, "How dwelleth the love of God in him?" - how can it dwell? Comp. chap. 4:20, where dunatai is added.

They stumbled at the doctrine in every form, because it involved the circumstance of the reunion of the spirit with matter, which they thought an evil. When, therefore, the objector asks, "How are the dead raised up?" (6) He is to be understood, not as

inquiring as to the process, but as to the possibility. The doubt may, indeed, be taken as an implied negation of the possibility of the resurrection with reference to God; and then the apostle, by referring to the springing up of the grain of corn, when dissolved and putrefied, may be understood to show that the event was not inconceivable, by referring to God's omnipotence, as shown in his daily providence, which, a priori, would appear as marvelous and incredible. But it is much more probable, that

the impossibility implied in this question refers, not to the power of God, which every Christian in the Church at Corinth must be supposed to have been taught to conceive of as almighty, and, therefore, adequate to the production of this effect; but as relating to the contrariety which was assumed to exist between the doctrine of the reunion of the soul with the body, and those hopes of a higher condition in a future life, which both reason and revelation taught them to form. The second question, "With what body do they

come?" like the former, is a question not of inquiry, but of denial, or, at least, of strong doubt, importing, that no idea could be entertained by the objector of any material body being made the residence of a disenthralled spirit, which could comport with those notions of deliverance from the bondage of corruption by death, which the philosophy of the age had taught, and which Christianity itself did not discountenance. The questions, though different, come, therefore, nearly to the same import,

and this explains why the apostle chiefly dwells upon the answer to the latter only, by which, in fact, he replies to both.

The grain cast into the earth even dies and is corrupted, and that which is sown is not "the body which shall be," in form and quality, but "naked grain;" yet into the plant, in its perfect form, is the same matter transformed. So the flesh of beasts, birds, fishes, and man, is the same matter, though exhibiting different qualities. So also bodies

celestial are of the same matter as "bodies terrestrial;" and the more splendid luminaries of the heavens are, in substance, the same as those of inferior glory. It is thus that the apostle reaches his conclusion, and shows that the doctrine of our reunion with the body implies in it no imperfection-nothing contrary to the hopes of liberation "from the burden of this flesh;" because of the high and glorified qualities which God is able to give to matter; of which the superior purity, splendor, and energy of

some material things in this world, in comparison of others, is a visible demonstration. For after he has given these instances, he adds, "So is the resurrection of the dead; it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural (an animal) body, it is raised a spiritual body," so called, "as being accommodated to a spirit, and far excelling all that is required for the transaction of earthly and terrene

affairs;" (Rosenmuller;) and so intent is the apostle on dissipating all those gross representations of the resurrection of the body which the objectors had assumed as the ground of their opposition, and which they had, probably, in their disputations, placed under the strongest views, that he guards the true Christian doctrine, on this point, in the most explicit manner,

"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth

corruption inherit incorruption;" and, therefore, let no man henceforward affirm, or assume it in his argument, that we teach any such doctrine. This, also, he strengthens, by showing, that as to the saints who are alive at the second coming of Christ, they also shall be in like manner"

changed," and that "this corruptible," as to them also, "shall put on incorruption."

(6) The present indicative verb is here used, as it is

generally throughout this chapter, for the future.

Thus, in the argument, the apostle confines himself wholly to the possibility of the resurrection of the body in a refined and glorified state; but omits all reference to the mode in which the thing will be effected, as being out of the line of the objector's questions, and in itself above human thought, and wholly miraculous. It is, however, clear, that when he speaks of the body as the subject of this wondrous "change," he

speaks of it popularly, as the same body in substance, whatever changes in its qualities or figure may be impressed upon it. Great general changes it will experience, as from corruption to incorruption, from mortality to immortality; great changes of a particular kind will also take place, as its being freed from deformities and defects, and the accidental varieties produced by climate, aliments, labor, and hereditary diseases. It is also laid down by our Lord, that, "in the

resurrection they shall neither marry nor be given in marriage, but be like to the angels of God;" and this also implies a certain change of structure; and we may gather from the declaration of the apostle, that though "the stomach" is now adapted "to meats, and meats to the stomach, God will destroy both it and them;" that the animal appetite for food will be removed, and the organ now adapted to that appetite have no place in the renewed frame.

But great as these changes are, the human form will be retained in its perfection, after the model of our Lord's "glorious body," and the substance of the matter of which it is composed will not thereby be affected. That the same body which was laid in the grave shall arise out of it, is the manifest doctrine of the Scriptures.

The notion of an incorruptible germ, or that of an original and unchangeable stamen, out of which a new and glorious body, at the

resurrection, is to spring, appears to have been borrowed from the speculations of some of the Jewish rabbis, who speak of some such supposed part in the human frame, under the name Luz, to which they ascribe marvelous properties, and from which the body was to arise. No allusion is, however made to any such opinion by the early fathers, in their defenses of the doctrine of the resurrection from the dead. On the contrary, they argue in such a way as to prove the possibility of the

reunion of the scattered parts of the body; which sufficiently shows that the germ theory had not been resorted to by Christian divines at least, in order to harmonize the doctrine of the resurrection with philosophy. So Justin Martyr, in a fragment of his concerning the resurrection, expressly answers the objection, that it is impossible for the flesh, after a corruption and perfect dissolution of all its parts, should be united together again, and contends, "that if the body be not raised complete,

with all its integral parts, it would argue a want of power in God;" and although some of the Jews adopted the notion of the germinating or springing up of the body from some one indestructible part, yet the most orthodox of their rabbis contended for the resurrection of the same body. So Maimonides says,

"Men, in the same manner as they before lived, with the same body, shall be restored to life by God, and sent into this life with the same identity:" and "that nothing can properly be

called a resurrection of the dead, but the return of the very same soul, into the very same body from which it was separated." (Rambam apud Pocockium in Notis Miscellan. Port. Mos. p. 125.) This theory, under its various forms, and whether adopted by Jews or Christians, was designed, doubtless, to render the doctrine of a resurrection from the dead less difficult to conceive, and more acceptable to philosophic minds; but, like most other attempts of the same kind to bring down the supernatural

doctrines of revelation to the level of our conceptions, it escapes none of the original difficulties, and involves itself in others far more perplexing.

For if by this hypothesis it was designed to remove the difficulty of conceiving how the scattered parts of one body could be preserved from becoming integral parts of other bodies, it supposes that the constant care of Providence is exerted to maintain the incorruptibility of those individual germs, or

stamina, so as to prevent their assimilation with each other. Now, if they have this by original quality, then the same quality may just as easily be supposed to appertain to every particle which composes a human body; so that though it be used for food, it shall not be capable of assimilation, in any circumstances, with another human body. But if these germs or stamina, have not this quality by their original nature, they can only be prevented from assimilating with each other by that operation of

God which is present to all his works, and which must always be directed to secure the execution of his own ultimate designs. If this view be adopted, then, if the resort must at last be to the superintendence of a Being of infinite power and wisdom, there is no greater difficulty in supposing that his care to secure this object shall extend to a million than to a thousand particles of matter. This is, in fact, the true and rational answer to the objection that the same piece of matter may happen to be a part of two

or more bodies, as in the instances of men feeding upon animals which have fed upon men, and of men feeding upon one another. The question here is one which simply respects the frustrating a final purpose of the Almighty by an operation of nature. To suppose that he cannot prevent this, is to deny his power; to suppose him inattentive to it, is to suppose him indifferent to his own designs; and to assume that he employs care to prevent it, is to assume nothing greater, nothing in fact so great, as

many instances of control, which are always occurring; as, for instance, the regulation of the proportion of the sexes in human births, which cannot be attributed to chance, but must either be referred to superintendence, or to some original law.

Thus these theories afford no relief to the only real difficulty involved in the doctrine, but leave the whole case still to be resolved into the almighty power of God. But they involve themselves in the

fatal objection, that they are plainly in opposition to the doctrine of the Scriptures. For, -

1. There is no resurrection of the body on this hypothesis, because the germ or stamina, can in no good sense be called "the body" If a finger, or even a limb, is not the body, much less can these minute parts be entitled to this appellation.

2. There is, on these theories, no resurrection at all. For if the preserved part be a germ, and the analogy of germination be

adopted; then we have no longer a resurrection from death, but a vegetation from a suspended principle of secret life. If the stamina of Leibnitz be contended for, then the body, into which the soul enters at the resurrection, with the exception of these minute stamina, is provided for it by the addition and aggregation of new matter, and we have a creation, not a resurrection.

3. If bodies in either of these modes, are to be framed for the soul, by the addition of a large mass of

new matter, the resurrection is made substantially the same with the pagan notion of the metempsychosis; and if St. Paul, at Athens, preached, not "Jesus and the resurrection," but Jesus and a transmigration into a new body, it will be difficult to account for his hearers scoffing at a doctrine, which had received the sanction of several of their own philosophic authorities.

Another objection to the resurrection of the body has been drawn from the

changes of its substance during life. The answer to this is, that allowing a frequent and total change of the substance of the body (which, however, is but an hypothesis) to take place, it effects not the doctrine of Scripture, which is, that the body which is laid in the grave shall be raised up. But then we are told, that if our bodies have in fact undergone successive changes during life, the bodies in which we have sinned or performed rewardable actions may not be, in many instances, the

same bodies as those which will be actually rewarded or punished. We answer, that rewards and punishments have their relation to the body, not so much as it is the subject but the instrument of reward and punishment. It is the soul only which perceives pain or pleasure, which suffers or enjoys, and is, therefore, the only rewardable subject. Were we, therefore, to admit such corporeal mutations as are assumed in this objection, they affect not the case of our accountability. The personal identity or

sameness of a rational being, as Mr. Locke has observed, consists in self consciousness:- "By this every one is to himself what he calls self, without considering whether that self be continued in the same or divers substances. It was by the same self which reflects on an action done many years ago, that the action was performed." If there were indeed any weight in this objection, it would affect the proceedings of human criminal courts in all cases of offences committed at some distance of time; but

it contradicts the common sense, because it contradicts the common consciousness and experience of mankind.

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PART THREE: THE MORALS OF CHRISTIANITY

50 THE MORAL LAW

Of the law of God, as the subject of a Divine and adequately authenticated revelation, some observations were made in

the first part of this work. That such a law exists, so communicated to mankind, and contained in the Holy Scriptures;- that we are under obligation to obey it as the declared will of our Creator and Lord;- that this obligation is grounded upon our natural relation to him as creatures made by his power, and dependent upon his bounty, are points which need not, therefore, be again adverted to, nor is it necessary to dwell upon the circumstances and degrees of its manifestation to men, under those former

dispensations of the true religion which preceded Christianity. We have exhibited the leading doctrines of the Scriptures, as they are found in that perfected system of revealed religion, which we owe to our Savior, and to his apostles, who wrote under the inspiration of that Holy Spirit whom he sent forth "to lead them into all truth;" and we shall now find in the discourses of our Lord, and in the apostolical writings, a system of moral principles, virtues, and duties, equaling in fullness and

perfection that great body of doctrinal truth which is contained in the New Testament; and deriving from it its vital influence and efficacy.

It is, however, to be noticed, that the morals of the New Testament are not proposed to us in the form of a regular code. Even in the books of Moses, which have the legislative form to a great extent, all the principles and duties which constituted the full character of "godliness," under that dispensation, are not made the subjects

of formal injunction by particular precepts. They are partly infolded in general principles, or often take the form of injunction in an apparently incidental manner, or are matters of obvious inference. A preceding code of traditionary moral law is also all along supposed in the writings of Moses and the prophets, as well as a consuetudinary ritual and a doctrinal theology; both transmitted from the patriarchs. This, too, is eminently the case with Christianity. It supposes that all who believed in

Christ admitted the Divine authority of the Old Testament; and it assumes the perpetual authority of its morals, as well as the truth of its fundamental theology. The constant allusions in the New Testament to the moral rules of the Jews and patriarchs, either expressly as precepts, or as the data of argument, sufficiently guard us against the notion, that what has not in so many words been re-enacted by Christ and his apostles is of no authority among Christians. In a great number of instances,

however, the form is directly perceptive, so as to have all the explicitness and force of a regular code of law; and is, as much as a regular code could be, a declaration of the sovereign will of Christ, enforced by the sanctions of eternal life and death.

This, however, is a point on which a few confirmatory observations may be usefully adduced.

No part of the preceding dispensation, designated generally by the appellation of "the law," is repealed in the New Testament, but

what is obviously ceremonial, typical, and incapable of co-existing with Christianity. Our Lord, in his discourse with the Samaritan woman, declares, that the hour of the abolition of the temple worship was come; the Apostle Paul, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, teaches us that the Levitical services were but shadows, the substance and end of which is Christ; and the ancient visible Church, as constituted upon the ground of natural descent from Abraham, was abolished by the

establishment of a spiritual body of believers to take its place.

No precepts of a purely political nature, that is, which respect the civil subjection of the Jews to their theocracy, are, therefore, of any force to us as laws, although they may have, in many cases, the greatest authority as principles. No ceremonial precepts can be binding, since they were restrained to a period terminating with the death and resurrection of Christ; nor are even the patriarchal

rites of circumcision and the Passover obligatory upon Christians, since we have sufficient evidence, that they were of an adumbrative character, and were laid aside by the first inspired teachers of Christianity.

With the moral precepts which abound in the Old Testament the case is very different, as sufficiently appears from the different and even contrary manner in which they are always spoken of by Christ and his apostles. When our Lord, in his sermon on the

mount, says, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy the law; but to fulfill;" that is, to confirm or establish it;- the entire scope of his discourse shows, that he is speaking exclusively of the moral precepts of the law, eminently so called, and of the moral injunctions of the prophets founded upon them, and to which he thus gives an equal authority.

And in so solemn a manner does he enforce this, that he adds, doubtless as foreseeing that attempts

would be made by deceiving or deceived men professing his religion to lessen the authority of the moral law, - "Whosoever, therefore, shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven;"

that is, as St. Chrysostom interprets, "he shall be the farthest from attaining heaven and happiness, which imports that he shall not attain it at all."

In like manner St. Paul, after having strenuously

maintained the doctrine of justification by faith alone, anticipates an objection by asking, "Do we then make void the law through faith?" and subjoins, "God forbid, yea, we establish the law:" meaning by "the law," as the context and his argument shows, the moral and not the ceremonial law.

After such declarations it is worse than trifling for any to contend, that, in order to establish the authority of the moral law of the Jews over Christians, it ought to

have been formally re-enacted.

To this we may, however, farther reply, not only that many important moral principles and rules found in the Old Testament were never formally enacted among the Jews, were traditional from an earlier age, and received at different times the more indirect authority of inspired recognition; but, to put the matter in a stronger light, that all the leading moral precepts of the Jewish Scriptures are, in point of fact, proposed in

a manner which has the full force of formal re-enactment, as the laws of the Christian Church. This argument, from the want of formal re-enactment, has therefore no weight. The summary of the law and the prophets, which is to love God with all our heart, and to serve him with all our strength, and to love our neighbor as ourselves, is unquestionably enjoined, and even re-enacted by the Christian Lawgiver. When our Lord is explicitly asked by "one who came unto him, and said, Good Master, what good thing

shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" the answer given shows that the moral law contained in the Decalogue is so in force under the Christian dispensation, that obedience to it is necessary to final salvation:- "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." And that nothing ceremonial is intended by this term is manifest from what follows. "He saith unto him, which?

Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou

shalt not steal," &c, Matt. 19:17-19. Here, also, we have all the force of a formal re-enactment of the Decalogue, a part of it being evidently put for the whole. Nor were it difficult to produce passages from the discourses of Christ and the writings of the apostles, which enjoin all the precepts of this law taken separately, by their authority, as indispensable parts of Christian duty, and that, too, under their original sanctions of life and death: so that the two circumstances which form the true character of a law

in its highest sense, divine authority and penal sanctions, are found as truly in the New Testament as in the Old. It will not, for instance, be contended, that the New Testament does not enjoin the acknowledgment and worship of one God alone; nor that it does not prohibit idolatry; nor that it does not level its maledictions against false and profane swearing; nor that the Apostle Paul does not use the very words of the fifth commandment perceptively when he says, Eph. 6:2, "Honor thy father

and mother, which is the first commandment with promise;"

nor that murder, adultery, theft, false witness, and covetousness, are not all prohibited under pain of exclusion from the kingdom of God. Thus, then, we have the whole Decalogue brought into the Christian code of morals by a distinct injunction of its separate precepts, and by their recognition as of permanent and unchangeable obligation: the fourth commandment, respecting the Sabbath

only, being so far excepted, that its injunction is not so expressly marked. This, however, is no exception in fact; for beside that its original place in the two tables sufficiently distinguishes it from all positive, ceremonial, and typical precepts, and gives it a moral character, in respect of its ends, which are, first, mercy to servants and cattle, and, second, the worship of Almighty God, undisturbed by worldly interruptions and cares, it is necessarily included in that

"law" which our Lord declares he came not to destroy, or abrogate; in that "law" which St. Paul declares to be "established by faith;" and among those "commandments" which our Lord declares must be "kept," if any one would "enter into life." To this, also, the practice of the apostles is to be added, who did not cease themselves from keeping one day in seven holy, nor teach others so to do; but gave to "the Lord's day" that eminence and sanctity in the Christian Church which the seventh day had

in the Jewish, by consecrating it to holy use s; an alteration not affecting the precept at all, except in an unessential circumstance, (if, indeed, in that,) and in which we may suppose them to act under Divine suggestion.

Thus, then, we have the obligation of the whole Decalogue as fully established in the New Testament as in the Old as if it had been formally re-enacted; and that no formal re-enactment of it took place, is itself a presumptive proof that it

was never regarded by the Lawgiver as temporary, which the formality of republication might have supposed.

It is important to remark, however, that although the moral laws of the Mosaic dispensation pass into the Christian code, they stand there in other and higher circumstances; so that the New Testament is a more perfect dispensation of the knowledge of the moral will of God than the old.

In particular,

1. They are more expressly extended to the heart, as by our Lord, in his sermon on the mount; who teaches us that the thought and inward purpose of any offence is a violation of the law prohibiting its external and visible commission.

2. The principles on which they are founded are carried out in the New Testament into a greater variety of duties, which, by embracing more perfectly the social and civil relations of life, are of a more universal character.

3. There is a much more enlarged injunction of positive and particular virtues, especially those which constitute the Christian temper.

4. By all overt acts being inseparably connected with corresponding principles in the heart, in order to constitute acceptable obedience, which principles suppose the regeneration of the soul by the Holy Ghost. This moral renovation is, therefore, held out as necessary to our salvation, and promised as a part of the

grace of our redemption by Christ.

5. By being connected with promises of Divine assistance, which is peculiar to a law connected with evangelical provisions.

6. By their having a living illustration in the perfect and practical example of Christ.

7. By the higher sanctions derived from the clearer revelation of a future state, and the more explicit promises of eternal life, and threatenings of eternal punishment.

It follows from this, that we have in the Gospel the most complete and perfect revelation of moral law ever given to men; and a more exact manifestation of the brightness, perfection, and glory of that law, under which angels and our progenitors in paradise were placed, and which it is at once the delight and interest of the most perfect and happy beings to obey.

It has, however, fared with morals as with doctrines, that they have been often, and by a strange perversity,

studied, without any reference to the authority of the Scriptures. As we have had systems of natural religion drawn out of the materials furnished by the Scriptures, and then placed to the sole account of human reason; so we have also various systems of morals drawn, as far as the authors thought fit, from the same source, and put forth under the title of moral philosophy, implying too often, or, at least, sanctioning the inference, that the unassisted powers of man are equally adequate to the discovery

of doctrine and duty; or, at best, that Christianity but perfects what uninspired men are able not only to commence, but to carry onward to a considerable approach to perfection. This observation may be made as to both-that whatever is found correct in doctrine, and pure in morals in ancient writers or systems, may be traced to indirect revelation; and that so far as mere reason has applied itself to discovery in either, it has generally gone astray. The modern systems of natural religion and ethics are

superior to the ancient, not because the reason of their framers is superior, but because they have had the advantage of a light from Christianity, which they have not been candid enough generally to acknowledge. For those who have written on such subjects with a view to lower the value of the Holy Scriptures, the remarks in the first part of this work must suffice; but of that class of moral philosophers, who hold the authority of the sacred books, and yet sedulously omit all reference to them,

it may be inquired what they propose, by disjoining morals from Christianity, and considering them as a separate science? Authority they cannot gain, for no obligation to duty can be so high as the command of GOD; nor can that authority be applied in so direct a manner, as by a revelation of his will: and as for the perfection of their system, since they discover no duties not already enjoined in the Scriptures, or grounded upon some general principles they contain, they can find no apology,

from the additions they make to our moral knowledge, to put Christianity, on all such subjects, wholly out of sight.

All attempts to teach morals, independent of Christianity, even by those who receive it as a Divine revelation, must, notwithstanding the great names which have sanctioned the practice, be considered as of mischievous tendency, although the design may have been laudable, and the labor, in some

subordinate respects, not without utility:-

1. Because they silently convey the impression, that human reason, without assistance, is sufficient do discover the full duty of man toward God and toward his fellow creatures.

2. Because they imply a deficiency in the moral code of our religion, which does not exist; the fact being that, although these systems borrow much from Christianity, they do not take in the whole of its moral principles, and, therefore, so far as they are

accepted, as substitutes, displace what is perfect for what is imperfect.

3. Because they turn the attention from what is fact, the revealed law of God, with its appropriate sanctions, and place the obligation to obedience either on fitness, beauty, general interest, or the natural authority of truth, which are all matters of opinion; or, if they ultimately refer it to the will of God, yet they infer that will through various reasonings and speculations,½which in

themselves are still matters of opinion and as to which men will feel themselves to be in some degree free.

4. The duties they enjoin are either merely outward in the act, and so they disconnect them from internal principles and habits, without which they are not acceptable to God, and but the shadows of real virtue, however beneficial they may be to men; or else they assume that human nature is able to engraft those principles and habits upon itself, and to practice them without abatement

and interruption; a notion which is contradicted by those very Scriptures they hold to be of Divine authority.

5. Their separation of the doctrines of religion from its morals, leads to an entirely different process of promoting morality among men to that which the infinite wisdom and goodness of God has established in the Gospel. They lay down the rule of conduct, and recommend it from its excellence per se, or its influence upon individuals and upon

society, or perhaps because it is manifested to be the will of the Supreme Being, indicated from the constitution of human nature, and the relations of men. But Christianity rigidly connects its doctrines with its morals. Its doctrine of man's moral weakness is made use of to lead him to distrust his own sufficiency. Its doctrine of the atonement shows at once the infinite evil of sin, and encourages men to seek deliverance from its power. Its doctrine of regeneration by the influence of the Holy Spirit,

implies the entire destruction of the love of evil, and the direction of the whole affection of the soul to universal virtue. Its doctrine of prayer opens to man a fellowship with God, invigorating to every virtue. The example of Christ, the imitation of which is made obligatory upon us, is in itself a moral system in action, and in principle; and the revelation of a future judgment brings the whole weight of the control of future rewards and punishments to bear upon the motives and actions of

men, and is the source of that fear of offending God, which is the constant guard of virtue, when human motives would in a multitude of cases avail nothing.

It may indeed be asked, whether the teaching of morals must then in all cases be kept in connection with religion? and whether the philosophy of virtues and of vices, with the lower motives by which they are urged upon men, may not be usefully investigated? We answer, that if the end proposed by this is not

altogether speculative, but something practical; if the case of an immoral world is taken up by moralists with reference to its cure, or even to its emendation in any effectual degree, the whole is then resolved into this simple question, - whether a weaker instrument shall be preferred to that which is powerful and effective? Certain it is that the great end of Christianity, so far as its influence upon society goes, is to moralize mankind; but its infinitely wise Author has established and authorized

but one process for the correction of the practical evils of the world, and that is, the teaching and enforcement of the whole truth as it stands in his own revelations; and to this only has he promised his special blessing. A distinct class of ethical teachers, imitating heathen philosophers in the principles and modes of moral tuition, is, in a Christian country, a violent anomaly; and implies an absurd return to the twilight of knowledge after the sun itself has arisen upon the world.

Within proper guards, and in strict connection with the whole Christian system, what is called moral philosophy is not, however, to be undervalued; and from many of the writers above alluded to much useful instruction may be collected, which, though of but little efficacy in itself, may be invigorated by uniting it with the vital and energetic doctrines of religion, and may thus become directive to the conduct of the serious Christian. Understanding then by moral philosophy, not that pride of science

which borrows the discoveries of the Scriptures, and then exhibits itself as their rival, or affects to supply their deficiencies; but as a modest scrutiny into the reasons on which the moral precepts of revelation may be grounded, and a wise and honest application of its moral principles to particular cases, it is a branch of science which may be usefully cultivated in connection with Christianity.

With respect to the reasons on which moral precepts

rest, we may make a remark similar to that offered in a former part of this work, on the doctrines of revelation. Some of those doctrines rest wholly on the authority of the Revealer; others are accompanied with a manifest rational evidence; and a third class may partially disclose their rationale to the patient and pious inquirer.

Yet the authority of each class as a subject of faith is the same; it rests upon the character of God and his relations to us; and that

doctrine is equally binding which is enjoined on our faith without other rational evidence than that which proves it to be a part of a revelation from heaven, as that which exercises, and delights our rational faculties, by a disclosure of the internal evidence of its truth. When God has permitted us to "turn aside" to see some "great sight" of manifested wisdom, we are to obey the invitation; but still we are always to remember that the authority of a revealed truth stands on infinitely higher ground than our

perception of its reasonableness.

So also as to the moral precepts of the Bible, the rational evidence is afforded in different degrees, and it is both allowable and laudable in us to investigate and collect it; but still with this caution, that the authority of such injunctions is not to be regulated by our perception of their reasons, although the reasons, when apparent, may be piously applied to commend the authority.

The discoveries we may make of fitness or any other quality in a precept cannot be the highest reason of our obedience; but it may be a reason for obeying with accelerated alacrity. The obligation of the Sabbath would be the same were no obvious reasons of mercy and piety connected with it; but the influence of the precept upon our interests and that of the community commends the precept to our affections as well as to our sense of duty.

With respect to the application of general precepts, that practical wisdom which is the result of large and comprehensive observation has an important office. The precepts of a universal revelation must necessarily be, for the most part, general, because if rules had been given for each case in detail, then truly, as St. John observes, "the world could not have contained the books written." The application of these general principles to that variety of cases which arises in human affairs, is

the work of the Christian preacher, and the Christian moralist. Where there is honesty of mind, ordinarily there can be no difficulty in this; and in cases which involve some difficulty, when the interpretation of the law is made, as it always ought, to favor the rule; and when, in doubtful cases, the safer course is adopted, such is the explicit character of the general principles of the Holy Scriptures, that no one can go astray. The moral philosophy which treats of exceptions to general rules, is always to

be watched with jealousy; and ought to be shunned when it presumes to form rules out of supposed exceptions. This is affecting to be wiser than the Lawgiver; and such philosophy assumes an authority in the control of human conduct to which it has no title; and steps in between individuals and their consciences in cases where almighty God himself has not chosen to relieve them; and where they are specially left, as all sometimes are, to

"Him with whom they have to do," without the intervention of any third party. Systems of casuistry and cases of conscience have happily gone into general disuse. That they have done more harm upon the whole than good, and defiled more consciences than they have relieved, cannot be doubted by any one who has largely examined them. They have passed away just in proportion as the Scriptures themselves have been circulated through society, and as that preaching has been most

prevalent which enforces the doctrine of supreme love to God and our neighbor, as the sum of the law and of the Gospel. They most abounded in the Romish Church, as best befitting its system of darkness and delusion; (7) and though works of this kind are found among Protestants in a better form, they have gradually and happily fallen into neglect.

(7) M. le Feore, preceptor of Louis XIII, not inaptly called casuistry, "the art of quibbling with God."

A few words may here be offered on what has been termed the ground of moral obligation.

Some writers have placed this in "the eternal and necessary fitness of things;" which leaves the matter open to the varying conclusions which different individuals may draw, as to this eternal and necessary fitness; and still farther, leaves that very natural question quite unanswered, -

Why is any one obliged to act according to the fitness of things?

Others have referred to a supposed original perception of what is right and wrong; a kind of fixed and permanent and unalterable moral sense, by which the qualities of actions are at once determined; and from the supposed universal existence of this perception, they have argued the obligation to act accordingly. This scheme, which seems to confound that in human nature to which an appeal may be made when the understanding is enlightened by real truth,

with a discriminating and directive principle acting independently of instruction, is also unsatisfactory.

For the moral sense is, in fact, found under the control of ignorance and error; nor does it possess a sensitiveness in all cases in proportion to the truth received into the understanding. The worst crimes have often been committed with a conviction of their being right, as in the case of religious persecutions; and the absence of the habit of

attending to the quality of our actions often renders the abstract truth laid up in the understanding useless, as to its influence upon the conscience. But if all that is said of this moral sense were true, still it would not establish the principle of obligation. That supposes superior authority; and should we allow the moral sense to act uniformly, still how is the obligation to perform what it approves to be demonstrated, unless some higher consideration be added to the case?

More modern moralists have taken the tendency of any course of action to produce the greatest good upon the whole as the source of moral obligation; and with this they often connect the will of God, of which they consider this general tendency to be the manifestation. It were better, surely, to refer at once to the will of God, as revealed by himself without encumbering the subject with the circuitous, and, at best, doubtful process of first considering what is good upon the whole, and then inferring that this

must needs be the will of a wise and benevolent Being.

The objection, too, holds in this case, that this theory leaves it still a mere matter of opinion, in which an interested party is to be the judge, whether an action be upon the whole good; and gives a rule which would be with difficulty applied to some cases, and is scarcely at all applicable to many others which may be supposed.

The only satisfactory answer which the question as to the source of moral obligation, can receive, is,

that it is found in the will of God. For since the question respects the duty of a created being with reference to his Creator, nothing can be more conclusive than that the Creator has an absolute right to the obedience of his creatures; and that the creature is in duty obliged to obey Him from whom it not only has received being, but by whom that being is constantly sustained.

It has indeed been said, that even if it be admitted, that I am obliged to obey

the will of God, the question is still open, "Why am I obliged to obey his will?" and that this brings us round to the former answer; because he can only will what is upon the whole best for his creatures. But this is confounding that which may be, and doubtless is, a rule to God in the commands which he issues, with that which really obliges the creature. Now, that which in truth obliges the creature is not the nature of the commands issued by God; but the relation in which the

creature itself stands to God. If a creature can have no existence, nor any power or faculty independently of God, it can have no right to employ its faculties independently of him; and if it have no right to employ its faculties in an independent manner, the right to rule its conduct must rest with the Creator alone; and from this results the obligation of the creature to obey.

Such is the principle assumed in the Scriptures, where the creative and

rectoral relations of God are inseparably united, and the obligation of obedience is made to follow upon the fact of our existence; and if the will of God, as the source of obligation, be so obvious a rule, the only remaining question is, whether we shall receive that will as it is expressly revealed by himself; or, willfully forgetting that such a revelation has been made, we shall proceed to infer it by various processes of induction? The answer to this might have been safely left to the common sense of mankind,

had not the vanity of philosophizing so often interposed to perplex so plain a point.

We must not here confound the will of God as the source of moral obligation, with the notion that right and wrong have no existence but as they are so constituted by the will of God. They must have their foundation in the reality of things. What moral rectitude is, and why it obliges, are quite distinct questions. It is to the latter only that the preceding observations apply. As to

the former, the following remarks, from a recent intelligent publication, are very satisfactory:-

"Virtue, as it regards man, is the conformity or harmony of his affections and actions with the various relations in which he has been placed, - of which conformity the perfect intellect of God, guided in its exercise by his infinitely holy nature, is the only infallible judge.

"We sustain various relations to God himself. He is our Creator, - our Preserver, - our Benefactor,

- our Governor. 'He is the Framer of our bodies, and the Father of our spirits.' He sustains us ' by the word of his power;' for, as we are necessarily dependent beings, our continued existence is a kind of prolonged creation. We owe all that we possess to him; and our future blessings must flow from his kindness. Now there are obviously certain affections and actions which harmonize or correspond with these relations. To love and obey God manifestly befit our relation to him, as that

great Being from whom our existence as well as all our comforts flow. He who showers his blessings upon us ought to possess our affections; he who formed us has a right to our obedience. It is not stated merely, let it be observed, that it is impossible to contemplate our relation to God without perceiving that we are morally bound to love and obey him; (though that is a truth of great importance;) for I do not consent to the propriety of the representation, that virtue depends either upon our

perceptions or our feelings. There is a real harmony between the relations in which we stand to God, and the feelings and conduct to which reference has been made; and therefore the human mind has been formed capable of perceiving and feeling it.

"We sustain various relations to each other. God has formed 'of one blood all the families of the earth.' Mutual love and brotherly kindness, the fruit of love, are required by this relation, - they harmonize or correspond

with it. We are children; we are loved, and guarded, and supported, and tended with unwearied assiduity by our parents. Filial affection and filial obedience are demanded by this relation; no other state of mind, no other conduct, will harmonize with it. We are, perhaps, on the other hand, parents. Instrumentally at least we have imparted existence to our children; they depend on us for protection, support, &c; and to render that support, is required by the relation we bear to them. It is, however,

needless to specify the various relations in which we stand to each other. With reference to all I again say, that they necessarily involve obligations to certain states of mind, and certain modes of conduct, as harmonizing with the relations; and that rectitude is the conformity of the character and conduct of an individual with the relations in which he stands to the beings by whom he is surrounded.

"It is by no means certain to me, that this harmony between the actions and

the relations of a moral agent, is not what we are to understand by that ' conformity to the fitness of things,' in which some writers have made the essence of virtue to consist. Against this doctrine, it has been objected, that it is indefinite, if not absurd; because, as it is alleged, it represents an action as right and fit, without stating what it is fit for, - an absurdity as great, says the objector, as it would be to say that c the angles at the base of an isosceles triangle are equal without adding to one another, or

to any other angle.' Dr. Brown also, in arguing against this doctrine says, 'There must be a principle of moral regard, independent of reason, or reason may in vain see a thousand fitnesses, and a thousand truths; and would be warmed with the same lively emotions of indignation, against an inaccurate timepiece or an error in arithmetic calculation, as against the wretch who robbed, by every fraud that could elude the law, those who had already little of which they could be deprived,

that he might riot a little more luxuriously, while the helpless, whom he had plundered, were starving around him.' Now, why may we not say, in answer to the former objector, that the conformity of an action with the relations of the agent, is the fitness for which Clarke contends? And why may not we reply to Dr. Brown, that, - allowing, as we do, the necessity of that susceptibility of moral emotion for which he contends, - the emotion of approbation which arises on the contemplation of a

virtuous action, is not the virtue of the action, nor the perception of its accordance with the relations of the agent, but the accordance ITSELF?

'That a being,' says Dewar, 'endowed with certain powers, is bound to love and obey the Creator and Preserver of all, is truth, whether I perceive it or no; and we cannot perceive it possible that it can ever be reversed.'

"All the relations to which reference has been made, are, in one sense, arbitrary. Our existence as creatures

is to be ascribed to the mere good pleasure of God. The relations which bind society together, the conjugal, parental, filial relation, depend entirely upon the sovereign will of Him who gave us our being; but the conduct to which these relations oblige us, is by no means arbitrary. Having determined to constitute the relations, he could not but enjoin upon us the conduct which his word prescribes. He was under no obligation to create us at all; but, having given us existence, he could not fail

to command us to love and obey him. There is a harmony between these relations, and these duties, - a harmony which is not only perceived by us, - for to state that merely, would seem to make our perceptions the rule, if not the foundation of duty,

- but which is perceived by the perfect intellect of God himself. And since the relations we sustain were constituted by God, since he is the Judge of the affections and conduct which harmonize with these relations, - that

which appears right to him, being right on that account, -

rectitude may be regarded as conformity to the moral nature of God, the ultimate standard of virtue" (Payne's Elements of Mental and Moral Science.)

To the revealed will of God we may now turn for information on the interesting subject of morals, and we shall find that the ethics of Christianity have a glory and perfection which philosophy has never heightened, and which its

only true office is to display, and to keep before the attention of mankind.

* * * * * * *

51 - THE DUTIES WE OWE TO GOD

The duties we owe to God are in Scripture summed up in the word "godliness," the foundation of which, and of duties of every other kind, is that entire submission to God, which springs from a due sense of that relation in which we stand to him, as creatures.

We have just seen that the right of an absolute sovereignty over us must, in the reason of the case, exist exclusively in Him that made us; and it is the perception and recognition of this, as a practical habit of the mind, which renders outward acts of obedience sincere and religious. The will of God is the only rule to man, in every thing on which that will has declared itself; and as it lays its injunctions upon the heart as well as the life, the rule is equally in force when it directs our opinions, our motives, and

affections, as when it enjoins or prohibits external acts. We are his because he made us; and to this is added the confirmation of this right by our redemption:

"Ye are not your own, but bought with a price; wherefore glorify God in your bodies and spirits which are his" These ideas of absolute right to command on the part of God, and of absolute obligation to universal obedience on the part of man, are united in the profession of St. Paul,

"Whose I am and whom I serve;" and form the grand fundamental principle of "godliness" both in the Old and New Testament; the will of God being laid down in each, both as the highest reason and the most powerful motive to obedience. The application of this principle so established by the Scriptures will show how greatly superior is the ground on which Christianity places moral virtue to that of any other system. For,

1. The will of God, which is the rule of duty, is authenticated by the whole of that stupendous evidence which proves the Scriptures to be of Divine original.

2. That will at once defines and enforces every branch of inward and outward purity, rectitude, and benevolence.

3. It annuls by its authority every other rule of conduct contrary to itself, whether it arise from custom, or from the example, persuasion, or opinions of others.

4. It is a rule which admits not of being lowered to the weak and fallen state of human nature; but, connecting itself with a gracious dispensation of supernatural help, it directs the morally imbecile to that remedy, and holds every one guilty of the violation of all that he is by nature and habit unable to perform, if that remedy be neglected.

5. It accommodates not itself to the interests or even safety of men: but requires that interest, honor, liberty, and life,

should be surrendered, rather than it should sustain any violation.

6. It admits no exceptions in obedience; but requires it whole and entire; so that outward virtue cannot be taken in the place of that which has its seat in the heart; and it allows no acts to be really virtuous, but those which spring from a willing and submissive mind, and are done upon the vital principle of a distinct recognition of our rightful subjection to God.

love to God. To serve and obey God on the conviction

that it is right to serve and obey him, is in Christianity joined with that love to God which gives life and animation to service, and renders it the means of exalting our pleasures, at the same time that it accords with our convictions. The supreme love of God is the chief, therefore, of what have been called our theopathetic affections.

It is the sum and the end of law; and though lost by us in Adam, is restored to us by Christ.

When it regards God absolutely, and in himself, as a being of infinite and harmonious perfections and moral beauties, it is that movement of the soul toward him which is produced by admiration, approval, and delight. When it regards him relatively, it fixes upon the ceaseless emanations of his goodness to us in the continuance of the existence which he at first bestowed; the circumstances which render that existence felicitous; and, above all, upon that "great love

wherewith he loved us," manifested in the gift of his Son for our redemption, and in saving us by his grace; or, in the forcible language of St. Paul, upon "the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness to us through Christ Jesus." Under all these views an unbounded gratitude overflows the heart which is influenced by this spiritual affection. But the love of God is more than a sentiment of gratitude. It rejoices in his perfections and glories, and devoutly contemplates them as the highest and most

interesting subjects of thought; it keeps the idea of this supremely beloved object constantly present to the mind; it turns to it with adoring ardor from the business and distractions of life; it connects it with every scene of majesty and beauty in nature, and with every event of general and particular providence; it brings the soul into fellowship with God, real and sensible, because vital; it moulds the other affections into conformity with what God himself wills or prohibits, loves or hates; it produces an

unbounded desire to please him, and to be accepted of him in all things; it is jealous of his honor, unwearied in his service, quick to prompt to every sacrifice in the cause of his truth and his Church; and it renders all such sacrifices, even when carried to the extent of suffering and death, unreluctant and cheerful. It chooses God as the chief good of the soul, the enjoyment of which assures its perfect and eternal interest and happiness. "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none

upon earth that I desire beside thee," is the language of every heart, when its love of God is true in principle and supreme in degree.

If, then, the will of God is the perfect rule of morals; and if supreme and perfect love to God must produce a prompt, an unwearied, a delightful subjection to his will, or rather, an entire and most free choice of it as the rule of all our principles, affections, and actions; the importance of this affection in securing that obedience to the law of

God in which true morality consists, is manifest; and we clearly perceive the reason why an inspired writer has affirmed, that "love is the fulfilling of the law." The necessity of keeping this subject before us under those views in which it is placed in the Christian system, and of not surrendering it to mere philosophy, is, however, an important consideration. With the philosopher the love of God may be the mere approval of the intellect; or a sentiment which results from the contemplation of infinite

perfection, manifesting itself in acts of power and goodness. In the Scriptures it is much more than either, and is produced and maintained by a different process. We are there taught that "the carnal mind is enmity to God;" and is not of course capable of loving God. Yet this carnal mind may consist with deep attainments in philosophy, and with strongly impassioned poetic sentiment. The mere approval of the understanding; and the susceptibility of being impressed with feelings of

admiration, awe, and even pleasure, when the character of God is manifested in his works, as both may be found in the carnal mind which is enmity to God, are not therefore the love of God. They are principles which enter into that love, since it cannot exist without them; but they may exist without this affection itself, and be found in a vicious and unchanged nature.

The love of God is a fruit of the Holy Spirit; that is, it is implanted by him only in the souls which he has

regenerated; and, as that which excites its exercise is chiefly, and in the first place, a sense of the benefits bestowed by the grace of God in our redemption, and a well-grounded persuasion of our personal interest in those benefits, it necessarily presupposes our personal reconciliation to God through faith in the atonement of Christ, and that attestation of it to the heart by the Spirit of adoption of which we have before spoken. We here see, then, another proof of the necessary connection of

Christian morals with Christian doctrine, and how imperfect and deceptive every system must be which separates them. Love is essential to true obedience; for when the apostle declares love to be "the fulfilling of the law," he declares, in effect, that the law cannot be fulfilled without love; and that every action which has not this for its principle, however virtuous in its show, fails of accomplishing the precepts which are obligatory upon us.

But this love to God cannot be felt so long as we are sensible of his wrath, and are in dread of his judgments. These feelings are incompatible with each other, and we must be assured of his reconciliation to us, before we are capable of loving him. Thus the very existence of the love of God implies the doctrines of the atonement, repentance, faith, and the gift of the Spirit of adoption to believers; and unless it be taught in this connection, and through this process of experience, it will be

exhibited only as a bright and beauteous object to which man has no access: or a fictitious and imitative sentimentalism will be substituted for it, to the delusion of the souls of men.

A third leading duty is, trust in God. All creatures are dependent upon God for being and for well being. Inanimate and irrational beings hold their existence and the benefits which may accompany it, independently of any conditions to be performed on their part. Rational

creatures are placed under another rule, and their felicity rests only upon their obedience. Whether, as to those intelligences who have never sinned, specific exercises of trust are required as a duty comprehended in their general obedience, we know not. But as to men, the whole Scripture shows, that faith or trust is a duty of the first class, and that they "stand only by faith." Whether the reason of this may be the importance to themselves of being continually impressed with their dependence upon

God, so that they may fly to him at all times, and escape the disappointments of self confidence, and creature reliance's; or that as all good actually comes from God, he ought to be recognized as its source, so that all creatures may glorify him; or whether other and more secret reasons may also be included; the fact that this duty is solemnly enjoined as an essential part of true religion, cannot be doubted. Nor can the connection of this habit of devoutly confiding in God with our peace of mind be

overlooked. We have so many proofs of the weakness both of our intellectual and physical powers, and see ourselves so liable to the influence of combinations of circumstances which we cannot control, and of accidents which we cannot resist, that, unless we had assurances of being guided, upheld, and defended by a Supreme Power, we might become, and that not unreasonably, a prey to constant apprehensions, and the sport of the most maddening anticipations of the imagination Our sole

remedy from these would, in fact, only be found in insensibility and thoughtlessness; for to a reflecting and awakened mind, nothing can shut out uneasy fears but faith in God. In all ages therefore this has been the resource of devout men: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble; therefore will we not fear," &c. Psalm 46:1. "Our fathers trusted in thee, and thou didst deliver them; they cried unto thee, and were delivered; they trusted in thee and were not confounded."

And from our Lord's sermon on the mount it is clear, that one end of his teaching was to deliver men from the piercing anxieties which the perplexities of this life are apt to produce, by encouraging them to confide in the care and bounty of their "heavenly Father."

Our trust in God is enjoined in as many respects as he has been pleased to give us assurances of help, and promises of favor, in his own word. Beyond that,

trust would be presumption, as not having authority; and to the full extent in which his gracious purposes toward us are manifested, it becomes a duty. And here too the same connection of this duty with the leading doctrines of our redemption, which we have remarked under the last particular, also displays itself. If morals be taught independent of religion, either affiance in God must be excluded from the list of duties toward God, or otherwise it will be inculcated without effect. A

man who is conscious of unremitted sins, and who must therefore regard the administration of the Ruler of the world, as to him punitive and vengeful, can find no ground on which to rest his trust. All that he can do is to hope that his relations to this Being may in future become more favorable; but, for the present, his fears must prevent the exercise of his faith. What course then lies before him, but in the first instance to seek the restoration of the favor of his offended God, in that method which he has

prescribed, namely, by repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ? Till a Scriptural assurance is obtained of that change in his relations to God which is effected by the free and gracious act of forgiveness, all the reasons of general trust in the care, benediction, and guidance of God, are vain as to him, because they are not applicable to his case. But when friendship is restored between the parties, faith, however unlimited, has the highest reason. It is then "a sure confidence in the mercy of God through

Christ," as that mercy manifests itself in all the promises which God has been pleased to make to his children, and in all those condescending relations with which he has been pleased to invest himself, that under such manifestations he might win and secure our reliance. It is then the confidence not merely of creatures in a beneficent Creator, or of subjects in a gracious Sovereign, but of children in a Parent. It respects the supply of every want, temporal and eternal: the wise and

gracious ordering of our concerns; the "warding off, or the mitigation of calamities and afflictions; our preservation from all that can upon the whole be injurious to us; our guidance through life; our hope in death; and our future felicity in another world. This trust is a duty because it is a subject of command; and also because, after such demonstrations of kindness, distrust would imply a dishonorable denial of the love and faithfulness of God, and often also a criminal

dependence upon the creature. It is a habit essential to piety. On that condition we "obtain promises," by making them the subjects of prayer; by its influence anxieties destructive to that calm contemplative habit of which true religion is both the offspring and the nurse, are expelled from the heart; a spiritual character is thus given to man, who walks as seeing "Him who is invisible;" and a noble and cheerful courage is infused into the soul, which elevates it above all cowardly shrinking from

difficulty, suffering, pain, and death, and affords a practical exemplification of the exhortation of one who had tried the value of this grace in a great variety of exigencies: "Wait upon the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, upon the Lord."

the fear of God is associated with love, and trust, in every part of Holy Scripture: and is enjoined upon us as another of our leading duties.

This, however, is not a servile passion; for then it

could not consist with love to God, and with delight and affiance in him. It is true that " the fear which hath torment:" that which is accompanied with painful apprehensions of his displeasure arising from a just conviction of our personal liability to it, is enjoined upon the careless and the impious. To produce this, the word of God fulminates in threatenings, and his judgments march through the earth exhibiting terrible examples of vengeance against one nation or individual for the

admonition of others. But that fear of God which arises from apprehension of personal punishment, is not designed to be the habit of the mind; nor is it included in the frequent phrase, "the fear of the Lord," when that is used to express the whole of practical religion, or its leading principles. In that case its nature is, in part, expressed by the term "reverence," which is a due and humbling sense of the Divine majesty, produced and maintained in a mind regenerated by the Holy Spirit, by devout

meditations upon the perfections of his infinite nature, his eternity and omniscience, his constant presence with us in every place, the depths of his counsels, the might of his power, the holiness, truth, and justice of his moral character; and on the manifestations of these glories in the works of that mighty visible nature with which we are surrounded, in the government of angels, devils, and men, and in the revelations of his inspired word.

With this deeply reverential awe of God, is, however, constantly joined in Scripture, a persuasion of our conditional liability to his displeasure. For since all who have obtained his mercy and favor by Christ, receive those blessings through an atonement, which itself demonstrates that we are under a righteous administration, and that neither is the law of God repealed, nor does his justice sleep; and farther, since the saving benefits of that atonement are conditional, and we our-

selves have the power to turn aside the benefit of its interposition from us, or to forfeit it when once received, in whole or in part, it is clear that while there is a full provision for our deliverance from the "spirit of bondage unto fear;" there is sufficient reason why we ought to be so impressed with our spiritual dangers, as to produce in us that cautionary fear of the holiness, justice, and power of God, which shall deter us from offending, and lead us often to view, with a restraining and salutary

dread, those consequences of unfaithfulness and disobedience to which, at least while we remain on earth, we are liable. Powerful, therefore, as are the reasons by which the Scriptural revelation of the mercy and benevolence of God enforces a firm affiance in him, it exhorts us not to be "high-minded," but to "fear;" to "fear" lest we "come short" of the "promise"

of entering "into his rest;" to be in "the fear of the Lord all the day long;" and to pass the whole time of

our "sojourning" here "in fear."

This Scriptural view of the fear of God, as combining both reverence of the Divine majesty, and a suitable apprehension of our conditional liability to his displeasure, is of large practical influence.

It restrains our faith from degenerating into presumption; our love into familiarity; our joy into carelessness. It nurtures humility, watchfulness, and the spirit of prayer. It induces a reverent habit of thinking and speaking of

God, and gives solemnity to the exercises of devotion. It presents sin to us under its true aspect, as dangerous, as well as corrupting to the soul; as darkening our prospects in a future life, as well as injurious to our peace in the present; and it gives strength and efficacy to that most important practical moral principle, the constant reference of our inward habits of thought and feeling, and our outward actions, to the approbation of God.

Upon these internal principles, that moral habit

and state, which is often expressed by the term holiness, rests. Separate from these principles, it can only consist in visible acts, imperfect in themselves, because not vital, and however commended by men, abominable to God who trieth the heart. But when such acts proceed from these sources, they are proportioned to the strength and purity of the principle which originates them, except as in some cases they may be influenced and deteriorated by an

uninformed or weak judgment. An entire submission to God; a

"perfect love" to him; firm affiance in his covenant engagements; and that fear which abases the spirit before God, and departs even from "the appearance of evil," when joined with a right understanding of the word of God, render "the man of God perfect," and; "thoroughly furnish him to every good work."

Beside these inward principles and affections, there are, however, several other habits and acts, a

public performance of which, as well as their more secret exercises, have been termed by divines our external duties toward God; the term "external" being, however, so used as not to exclude those exercises of the heart from which they must all spring if acceptable to God. The first is, prayer, which is a. solemn addressing of our minds to God, as the Fountain of being and happiness, the Ruler of the world, and the Father of the family of man. It includes in it the acknowledgment of the

Divine perfections and sovereignty; thankfulness for the mercies we have received; penitential confession of our sins; and an earnest entreaty of blessings, both for ourselves and others. When vocal it is an external act, but supposes the correspondence of the will and affection; yet it may be purely mental, all the acts of which it is composed being often conceived in the mind, when not clothed in words.

That the practice of prayer is enjoined upon us in

Scripture, is sufficiently proved by a few quotations: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened," Matt. 7:7. "Watch ye therefore and pray always," Luke 21:36. "Be careful for nothing; but, in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God," Phil. 4:6. "Pray without ceasing," 1 Thess. 5:17. That prayer necessarily includes earnestness, and that perseverance which is inspired by strong desire, is

evident, from the Jews being so severely reproved for "drawing near to God with their lips, while their hearts were far from him:" - from the general rule of our Lord laid down in his conversation with the woman of Sychar: "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth" John 4:24, - and, from Romans 12:12, "Continuing instant in prayer." Here the term, proskartero·ntes, is very energetic, and denotes, as Chrysostom observes, "fervent, persevering, and earnest

prayer." Our Lord also delivered a parable to teach us that we ought "to pray and not faint;" and we have examples of the success of reiterating our petitions, when for some time they appear disregarded. One of these is afforded in the case of the woman of Canaan, a first and a second time repulsed by our Lord; and another occurs in 2 Cor. 12:8, 9, "For this I besought the Lord thrice that it might depart from me; and he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee,"

&c. This passage also affords an instance of praying distinctly for particular blessings, a practice which accords also with the direction in Phil, 4:6, to make our "requests known unto God,"

which includes not only our desires for good generally; but also those particular requests which are suggested by special circumstances. Directions to pray for national and public blessings occur in Psalm 122:6, "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem, they shall prosper that love

thee:" in Zech. 10:1, "Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain; so the Lord shall make bright clouds," (or lightnings,) "and give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field:" in 1

Tim. 2:1-3, "I exhort therefore that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty; for this is good and acceptable

in the sight of God our Savior," &c. More particular intercession for others is also authorized and enjoined:

"Peter was therefore kept in prison; but prayer was made without ceasing of the Church unto God for him," Acts 12:5. "Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me; that I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judea," &c, Rom. 15:30.

"Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed," James 5:16.

It follows, therefore, from these Scriptural passages, that prayer is a duty; that it is made a condition of our receiving good at the hand of God; that every case of personal pressure, or need, may be made the subject of prayer; that we are to intercede for all immediately connected with us, for the Church, for our country, and for all mankind; that both temporal and spiritual

blessings may be the subject of our supplications; and that these great and solemn exercises are to be accompanied with grateful thanksgivings to God as the author of all blessings already bestowed, and the benevolent object of our hope as to future interpositions and supplies. Prayer, in its particular Christian view, is briefly and well defined in the Westminster Catechism, -

"Prayer is the offering of our desires to God for

things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and a thankful acknowledgment of his mercies."

The reason on which this great and efficacious duty rests has been a subject of some debate. On this point, however, we have nothing explicitly stated in the Scriptures. From them we learn only, that God has appointed it; that he enjoins it to be offered in faith, that is, faith in Christ, whose atonement is the meritorious and procuring

cause of all the blessings to which our desires can be directed; and that prayer so offered is an indispensable condition of our obtaining the blessings for which we ask. As a matter of inference, however, we may discover some glimpses of the reason in the Divine mind on which its appointment rests. That reason has sometimes been said to be the moral preparation and state of fitness produced in the soul for the reception of the Divine mercies which the act, and, more especially, the habit of prayer, must

induce. Against this stands the strong and, in a Scriptural view, the fatal objection, that an efficiency is thus ascribed to the mere act of a creature to produce those great, and in many respects, radical changes in the character of man, which we are taught, by inspired authority, to refer to the direct influences of the Holy Spirit. What is it that fits man for forgiveness, but simply repentance? Yet that is expressly said to be the "gift" of Christ, and supposes strong operations of the illuminating and

convincing Spirit of truth, the Lord and Giver of spiritual life; and if the mere acts and habit of prayer had efficiency enough to produce a Scriptural repentance, then every formalist, attending with ordinary seriousness to his devotions, must, in consequence, become a penitent. Again, if we pray for spiritual blessings aright, that is, with an earnestness of desire which arises from a due apprehension of their importance, and a preference of them to all earthly good, who does not

see that this implies such a deliverance from the earthly and carnal disposition which characterizes our degenerate nature, that an agency far above our own, however we may employ it, must be supposed; or else, if our own prayers could be efficient up to this point, we might, by the continual application of this instrument, complete our regeneration, independent of that grace of God, which, after all, this theory brings in. It may indeed be said that the grace of God operates by our prayers to

produce in us a state of moral fitness to receive the blessings we ask.

But this gives up the point contended for, the moral efficiency of prayer; and refers the efficiency to another agent working by our prayers as an instrument. Still, however, it may be affirmed, that the Scriptures nowhere represent prayer as an instrument for improving our moral state, though in the hands of Divine grace, in any other way than as the means of bringing into the soul new supplies of

spiritual life and strength. It is therefore more properly to be considered as a condition of our obtaining that grace by which such effects are wrought, than as the instrument by which it effects them. In fact, all genuine acts of prayer depend upon a grace previously bestowed, and from which alone the disposition and the power to pray proceed. So it was said of Saul of Tarsus, "Behold he prayeth!" He prayed in fact then for the first time; but that was in consequence of the

illumination of his mind as to his spiritual danger effected by the miracle on the way to Damascus, and the grace of God which accompanied the miracle. Nor does the miraculous character of the means by which conviction was produced in his mind, affect the relevancy of this to ordinary cases. By whatever means God may be pleased to fasten the conviction of our spiritual danger upon our minds, and to awaken us out of the long sleep of sin, that conviction must precede real prayer, and comes

from the influence of his grace, rendering the means of conviction effectual. Thus it is not the prayer which produces the conviction, but the conviction which gives birth to the prayer; and if we pursue the matter into its subsequent stages, we shall come to the same result. We pray for what we feel we want; that is, for something not in our possession; we obtain this either by impartation from God, to whom we look up as the only Being able to bestow the good for which we ask him; or else we

obtain it, according to this theory, by some moral efficiency being given to the exercise of praying to work it in us. Now, the latter hypothesis is in many cases manifestly absurd. We ask for pardon of sin, for instance; but that is an act of God done for us, quite distinct from any moral change which prayer may be said to produce in us, whatever efficiency we may ascribe to it; for no such change in us can be pardon, since that must proceed from the party offended. We ask for increase of spiritual

strength; and prayer is the expression of that want. But if it supply this want by its own moral efficiency, it must supply it in proportion to its intensity and earnestness; which intensity and earnestness can only be called forth by the degree in which the want is felt, so that the case supposed is contradictory and absurd, as it makes the sense of want to be in proportion to the supply which ought to abate or remove it. And if it be urged, that prayer at least produces in us a fitness for the supply of spiritual

strength, because it is excited by a sense of our wants, the answer is, that the fitness contended for consists in that sense of want itself, which must be produced in us by the previous agency of grace, or we should never pray for supplies. There is, in fact, nothing in prayer simply which appears to have any adaptation, as an instrument, to effect a moral change in man, although it should be supposed to be made use of by the influence of the Holy Spirit. The word of God is properly an instrument,

because it contains the doctrine which that Spirit explains and applies, and the motives to faith and obedience which he enforces upon the conscience and affections; and though prayer brings these truths and motives before us, prayer cannot properly be said to be an instrument of our regeneration, because that wh ich is thus brought by prayer to bear upon our case is the word of God itself introduced into our prayers, which derive their sole influence in that respect from that

circumstance. Prayer simply is the application of an insufficient to a sufficient Being for the good which the former cannot otherwise obtain, and which the latter only can supply; and as that supply is dependent upon prayer, and in the nature of the thing consequent, prayer can in no good sense be said to be the instrument of supplying our wants, or fitting us for their supply, except relatively, as a mere condition appointed by the donor.

If we must inquire into the reason of the appointment of prayer, and it can scarcely be considered as a purely arbitrary institution, that reason seems to be, the preservation in the minds of men of a solemn and impressive sense of God's agency in the world, and the dependence of all creatures upon him. Perfectly pure and glorified beings, no longer in a state of probation, and therefore exposed to no temptations, may not need this institution; but men in their fallen state are constantly prone to forget

God; to rest in the agency of second causes; and to build upon a sufficiency in themselves. This is at once a denial to God of the glory which he rightly claims, and a destructive delusion to creatures, who, in forsaking God as the object of their constant affiance, trust but in broken reeds, and attempt to drink from "broken cisterns which can hold no water." It is then equally in mercy to us, as in respect to his own honor and acknowledgment, that the Divine Being has suspended so many of his blessings, and those of the

highest necessity to us, upon the exercise of prayer; an act which acknowledges his uncontrollable agency, and the dependence of all creatures upon him; our insufficiency, and his fullness; and lays the foundation of that habit of gratitude and thanksgiving, which is at once so ameliorating to our own feelings, and so conducive to a cheerful obedience to the will of God. And if this reason for the injunction of prayer is nowhere in Scripture stated in so many words, it is a principle

uniformly supposed as the foundation of the whole scheme of religion which they have revealed.

To this duty objections have been sometimes offered, at which it may be well at least to glance.

One has been grounded upon a supposed predestination of all things which come to pass; and the argument is, that as this established predetermination of all things cannot be altered, prayer, which supposes that God will depart from it, is vain and useless. The

answer which a pious predestinarian would give to this objection is, That the argument drawn from the predestination of God lies with the same force against every other human effort, as against prayer; and that as God's predetermination to give food to man does not render the cultivation of the earth useless and impertinent, so neither does the predestination of things shut out the necessity and efficacy of prayer. It would also be urged, that God has ordained the means as well

as the end: and although he is an unchangeable Being, it is a part of the unchangeable system which he has established, that prayer shall be heard and accepted.

Those who have not these views of predestination will answer the objection differently; for if the premises of such a predestination as is assumed by the objection, and conceded in the answer, be allowed, the answer is unsatisfactory. The Scriptures represent God, for instance, as

purposing to inflict a judgment upon an individual or a nation, which purpose is often changed by prayer. In this case either God's purpose must be denied, and then his threatenings are reduced to words without meaning; or the purpose must be allowed, in which case either prayer breaks in upon predestination, if understood absolutely, or it is vain and useless. To the objection so drawn out it is clear that no answer is given by saying that the means as well as the end are predestinated, since

prayer in such cases is not a means to the end, but an instrument of thwarting it; or is a means to one end in opposition to another end, which, if equally predestinated with the same absoluteness, is a contradiction.

The true answer is, that although God has absolutely predetermined some things, there are others, which respect his government of free and accountable agents, which he has but conditionally predetermined. - The true immutability of God we

have already showed, (part 2, chap. 28;) consists, not in his adherence to his purposes, but in his never f changing the principles of his administration; and he may therefore in perfect accordance with his preordination of things, and the immutability of his nature, purpose to do, under certain conditions dependent upon the free agency of man, what he will not do under others; and for this reason, that an immutable adherence to the principles of a wise, just, and gracious government, requires it.

Prayer is in Scripture made one of these conditions; and if God has established it as one of the principles of his moral government to accept prayer, in every case in which he has given us authority to ask, he has not, we may be assured, entangled his actual government of the world with the bonds of such an eternal predestination of particular events, as either to reduce prayer to a mere form of words, or not to be able himself, consistently with his decrees, to answer it, whenever it is

encouraged by his express engagements.

A second objection is, that as God is infinitely wise and good, his wisdom and justice will lead him to bestow "whatever is fit for us without praying; and if any thing be not fit for us, we cannot obtain it by praying." To this Dr. Paley very well replies, (Moral Philosophy,) "That it may be agreeable to perfect wisdom to grant that to our prayers which it would not have been agreeable to the same wisdom to have given us without praying for."

This, independent of the question of the authority of the Scriptures which explicitly enjoin prayer, is the best answer which can be given to the objection; and it is no small confirmation of it, that it is obvious to every reflecting man, that for God to withhold favors till asked for, "tends," as the same writer observes, "to encourage devotion among his rational creatures, and to keep up and circulate a knowledge and sense of their dependency upon him." But it is urged, "God will always do what is best

from the moral perfection of his nature, whether we pray or not." This objection, however, supposes, that there is but one mode of acting for the best, and that the Divine will is necessarily determined to that mode only "both which positions," says Paley, "presume a knowledge of universal nature, much beyond what we are capable of attaining." It is, indeed, a very unsatisfactory mode of speaking, to say, God will always do what is best; since we can conceive him

capable in all cases of doing what is still better for the creature, and also that the creature is capable of receiving more and more from his infinite fullness for ever. All that can be rationally meant by such a phrase is, that in the circumstances of the case, God will always do what is most consistent with his own wisdom, holiness, and goodness; but then the disposition to pray, and the act of praying, add a new circumstance to every case, and often bring many other new circumstances along with them. It supposes

humility, contrition, and trust, on the part of the creature; and an acknowledgment of the power and compassion of God, and of the merit of the atonement of Christ: all which are manifestly new positions, so to speak, of the circumstances of the creature, which, upon the very principle of the objection, rationally understood, must be taken into consideration.

But if the efficacy of prayer as to ourselves be granted, its influence upon the case of others is said to be more

difficult to conceive. This may be allowed without at all affecting the duty.

Those who bow to the authority of the Scriptures will see, that the duty of praying for ourselves and for others rests upon the same Divine appointment; and to those who ask for the reason of such intercession in behalf of others, it is sufficient to reply, that the efficacy of prayer being established in one case, there is the same reason to conclude that our prayers may benefit others, as any other effort we may

use. It can only be by Divine appointment that one creature is made dependent upon another for any advantage, since it was doubtless in the power of the Creator to have rendered each independent of all but himself. Whatever, reason, therefore, might lead him to connect and interweave interests of the one man with the benevolence of another, will be the leading reason for that kind of mutual dependence which is implied in the benefit of mutual prayer. Were it only that a previous sympathy,

charity, and good will, are implied in the duty, and must, indeed, be cultivated in order to it, and be strengthened by it, the wisdom and benevolence of the institution would, it is presumed, be apparent to every well constituted mind.

That all prayer for others must proceed upon a less perfect knowledge of them than we have of ourselves, is certain: that all our petitions must be, even in our own mind, more conditional than those which respect ourselves,

though many of these must be subjected to the principles of a general administration, which we but partially apprehend; and that all spiritual influences upon others, when they are the subject of our prayers, will be understood by us as liable to the control of their free agency, must also be conceded; and, therefore, when others are concerned, our prayers may often be partially or wholly fruitless. He who believes the Scriptures will, however, be encouraged by the declaration, that "the

effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man," for his fellow creatures, "availeth much;" and he who demands something beyond mere authoritative declaration, as he cannot deny that prayer is one of those instruments by which another may be benefited, must acknowledge that, like the giving of counsel, it may be of great utility in some cases, although it should fail in others; and that as no man can tell how much good counsel may influence another, or in many cases say whether it has ultimately failed or not,

so it is with prayer. It is a part of the Divine plan, as revealed in his word, to give many blessings to man independent of his own prayers, leaving the subsequent improvement of them to himself. They are given in honor of the intercession of Christ, man's great "Advocate;" and they are given, subordinately, in acceptance of the prayers of Christ's Church, and of righteous individuals. And when many, or few, devout individuals become thus the instruments of good to communities, or to whole

nations, there is no greater mystery in this than in the obvious fact, that the happiness or misery of large masses of mankind is often greatly affected by the wisdom or the errors, the skill or the incompetence, the good or the bad conduct of a few persons, and often of one.

The general duty of prayer is usually distributed into four branches, - Ejaculatory, private, social, and public; each of which is of such importance as to require a separate consideration.

ejaculatory prayer is the term given to those secret and frequent aspirations of the heart to God for general or particular blessings, by which a just sense of our habitual dependence upon God, and of our wants and dangers, may be expressed, at those intervals when the thoughts can detach themselves from the affairs of life, though but for a moment, while we are still employed in them. It includes, too, all those short and occasional effusions of gratitude, and silent ascriptions of praise, which the remembrance of

God's mercies will excite in a devotional spirit, under the same circumstances. Both, however, presuppose what divines have called, "the spirit of prayer,"

which springs from a sense of our dependence upon God, and is a breathing of the desires after intercourse of thought and affection with him, accompanied with a reverential and encouraging sense of his constant presence with us. The cultivation of this spirit is clearly enjoined upon us as a duty by the

Apostle Paul, who exhorts us to "pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks;" and also to "set our affections upon things above;" - exhortations which imply a holy and devotional frame and temper of mind, and not merely acts of prayer performed at intervals.

The high and unspeakable advantages of this habit, are, that it induces a watchful and guarded mind; prevents religion from deteriorating into form without life; unites the soul to God, its light

and strength; induces continual supplies of Divine influence; and opposes an effectual barrier, by the grace thus acquired, against the encroachments of worldly anxieties, and the force of temptations. The existence of this spirit of prayer and thanksgiving is one of the grand distinctions between nominal and real Christians; and by it the measure of vital and effective Christianity enjoyed by any individual may ordinarily be determined.

Private Prayer. This, as a duty, rests upon the examples of good men in Scripture; upon several passages of an injunctive character in the Old Testament; and, in the New, upon the express words of our Lord, which, while they suppose the practice of individual prayer to have been generally acknowledged as obligatory, enjoin that it should be strictly private. "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, (8) and when thou hast shut the door, pray to thy Father which is in

secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." In this respect, also, Christ has himself placed us under the obligation of his own example; the evangelists having been inspired to put on record several instances of his retirement into absolute privacy that he might "pray." The reason for this institution of private devotion appears to have been to incite us to a friendly and confiding intercourse with God in all those particular cases which most concern our

feelings and our interests; and it is a most affecting instance of the condescension and sympathy of God, that we are thus allowed to use a freedom with him, in "pouring out our hearts," which we could not do with our best and dearest friends. It is also most worthy of our notice, that when this duty is enjoined upon us by our Lard, he presents the Divine Being before us under a relation most of all adapted to inspire that unlimited confidence with which he would have us to approach

him:- "Pray to thy father which is in secret." Thus is the dread of his omniscience, indicated by his "seeing in secret," and of those other overwhelming attributes which omnipresence and omniscience cannot fail to suggest, mitigated, or only employed to inspire greater freedom, and a stronger affiance.

(8) Eis to tameion. Kuinoel observes, that the word "answers to the Hebrew chuppah, an upper room set apart for retirement

and prayer, among the orientals.

family prayer. Paley states the peculiar use of family prayer to consist in its influence upon servants and children, whose attention may be more easily commanded by this than by public worship. "The example and authority of a master and father act, also, in this way with greater force; and the ardor of devotion is better supported, and the sympathy more easily propagated through a small assembly, connected by the affections of domestic society, than in the

presence of a mixed congregation." There is, doubtless, weight in these remarks; but they are defective, both in not stating the obligation of this important duty, and in not fully exhibiting its advantages,

The absence of an express precept for family worship has, it is true, been urged against its obligation even by some who have still considered it as a prudential and useful ordinance. But the strict obligation of so important a duty is not to be

conceded for a moment, since it so plainly arises out of the very constitution of a family; and is confirmed by the earliest examples of the Church of God. On the first of these points the following observations, from a very able and interesting work, (Anderson on the Domestic Constitution,) are of great weight:-

"The disposition of some men, professing Christianity, to ask peremptorily for a particular precept in all cases of incumbent moral

duty, is one which every Christian would do well to examine; not only that he may never be troubled with it himself, but that he may be at no loss in answering such a man, if he is called to converse with him. The particular duty to which he refers, - say, for example, family worship, - is comparatively of small account. His question itself is indicative not merely of great ignorance; it is symptomatic of the want of religious principle. When a man says that he can only be bound to such a duty, a moral duty, by a positive

and particular precept, I am satisfied that he could not perform it, in obedience to any precept whatever; nor could he even now, though he were to try. The truth is, that this man has no disposition toward such worship, and he rather requires to be informed of the grounds of all such obligation.

"The duty of family devotion, therefore, let it be remembered, though it had been minutely enjoined as to both substance and season, would not, after all, have

been founded only on such injunctions. I want the reader thoroughly to understand the character of a Christian, the constitution of the family; and out of this character and that constitution, he will find certain duties to arise necessarily; that is, they are essential to the continuance and well being of himself as a Christian parent, and of the constitution over which he is set. In this case there can be no question as to their obligation, and for a precept there is no necessity. The Almighty, in

his word, has not only said nothing in vain, but nothing except what is necessary. Now, as to family worship, for a particular precept I have no wish; no, not even for the sake of others, because I am persuaded that the Christian, in his sober senses, will naturally obey and no other can.

"To apply, however, this request for a precise precept to some other branches of family duty:-

What would be thought of me, were I to demand an express precept to enforce

my obligation to feed my children, and another to oblige me to clothe them? one to express my obligation to teach them the use of letters, and another to secure my training them to lawful or creditable professions or employments? 'All this,' very properly you might reply, 'is absurd in the highest degree; your obligation rests on much higher ground; nay, doth not nature itself teach you in this, and much more than this? 'Very true,' I reply; 'and is renewed

nature, then, not to teach me far more still?

To what other nature are such words as these addressed? -Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.'

"Independently, however, of all this evidence with any rational Christian parent, I may confirm and establish

his mind on much higher ground than even that which these pointed examples afford. To such a parent I might say, 'Without hesitation, you will admit that your obligations to your family are to be measured now, and on the day of final account, by your capacity, - as a man by your natural, as a Christian by your spiritual capacity? and, however you may feel conscious of falling short daily, that you are under obligation to honor God to the utmost limit of this capacity? You will also

allow that, standing where you do, you are not now, like a solitary orphan without relatives, to be regarded only as a single individual. God himself, your Creator, your Savior, and your Judge, regards you as the head of a family; and, therefore, in possession of a sacred trust; you have the care of souls? Now if you really do measure obligation by capacity, then you will also at once allow, that you must do what you can, that he may, from your family, have as much honor as possible.

"'Without hesitation you will also allow that God daily preserves you? And does he not also preserve your family? But if he preserves, he has a right of property in each and all under your roof. Shall he not, therefore, have from you acknowledgment of this? If daily he preserves, shall he not be daily acknowledged? And if acknowledged at all, how ought he to be so, if not upon your knees? And how can they know this if they do not hear it?

"'Without hesitation you will also allow that you are a social as well as a reasonable being? And often have you, therefore, felt how much the soothing influence of their sweet society has sustained you under your cares and trials, and grief itself. O! surely then, as a social being, you owe to them social worship; nor should you ever forget, that, in ancient days, there was social worship here before it could be any where else.' "

The same excellent writer has not, in his subsequent

argument, given to the last remark in the above quotation all the force which it demands; for that social worship existed before worship more properly called public, that is worship in indiscriminate assemblies, is the point, which, when followed out, most fully establishes the obligation. A great part, at least, of the worship of the patriarchal times was domestic. The worship of God was observed in the families of Abraham, Jacob, and Job; nay, the highest species of worship, the offering of

sacrifices, which it could not have been without Divine appointment. It arose, therefore, out of the original constitution of a family, that the father and natural head was invested with a sacred and religious character, and that with reference to his family; and if this has never been revoked by subsequent prohibition; but on the contrary, if its continuance has been subsequently recognized; then the family priesthood continues in force, and stands on the same ground as several other religious obligations,

which have passed from one dispensation of revealed religion to another, without express re-enactment.

Let us then inquire, whether any such revocation of this office, as originally vested in the father of a family, took place after the appointment of a particular order of priests under the Mosaic economy. It is true that national sacrifices were offered by the Aaronical priests, and perhaps some of those consuetudinary sacrifices,

which, in the patriarchal ages, were offered by the heads of families, and had reference specially to the general dispensation of religion under which every family was equally placed; yet the passover was a solemn religious act, the domestic nature of which is plainly marked, and it was to be an ordinance for ever, and therefore was not taken out of the hands of the heads of families by the institution of the Aaronical priesthood, although the ceremony comprehended several direct acts of worship. The solemn

instruction of the family is also in the law of Moses enjoined upon the father, " Thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children;"and he was also directed to teach them the import of the different festivals, and other commemorative institutions. Thus the original relation of the father to his family, which existed in the patriarchal age, is seen still in existence, though changed in some of its circumstances by the law. He is still the religious teacher; still he offers

prayers for them to God; and still "blesses," - an act which imports both prayer, praise, and official benediction. So the family of Jesse had a yearly sacrifice, 1 Sam. 20:6. So David, although not a priest, returned to "bless his household;" and our Lord filled the office of the master of a family, as appears from his eating the passover with his disciples, and presiding as such over the whole rite: and although the passage, "Pour out thy fury upon the heathen, and upon the families which call not

upon thy name," Jer. 10:25, does not perhaps decidedly refer to acts of domestic worship, yet it is probable that the phraseology was influenced by that practice among the pious Jews themselves;- neither did the heathen nationally, nor in their families, acknowledge God. Nor is it a trifling confirmation of the ancient practice of a formal and visible domestic religion, that in paganism, which corrupted the forms of the true religion, and especially those of the patriarchal dispensation, we see the signs of a family

as well as a public idolatry, as exhibited in their private "chambers of imagery," their household deities; and the religious ceremonies which it was incumbent upon the head of every house to perform.

The sacred character and office of the father and master of a household passed from Judaism into Christianity; for here, also, we find nothing which revokes and repeals it. A duty so well understood both among Jews and even heathens, as that the head of the house ought to

influence its religious character, needed no special injunction. The father or master who believed was baptized, and all his "house;" the first religious societies were chiefly domestic; and the antiquity of domestic religious services among Christians, leaves it unquestionable, that when the number of Christians increased so as to require a separate assembly in some common room or church, the domestic worship was not superseded. But for the division of verses in the fourth chapter of the

Epistle to the Colossians, it would scarcely have been suspected that the first and second verses contained two distinct and unconnected precepts, - "Masters give unto your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven; continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving;" a collocation of persons and duties which seems to intimate that the sense of the apostle was, that the "servant," the slave should partake of the benefit of those continual prayers

and daily thanksgivings which it is enjoined upon the master to offer.

As the obligation to this branch of devotion is passed over by Paley, so the advantages of family worship are but very imperfectly stated by him. The offering of prayer to God in a family cannot but lay the ground of a special regard to its interests and concerns on the part of him, who is thus constantly acknowledged; and the advantage, therefore, is more than a mere sentimental one; and more

than that of giving effect to the "master's example." The blessings of providence and of grace; defense against evil, or peculiar supports under it, may thus be expected from Him, who has said, "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths;" and that when two or three are met in his name, he is "in the midst of them." The family is a "Church in a house;" and its ministrations, as they are acceptable to God, cannot but be followed by his direct blessing.

Public Prayer, under which we include the assembling of ourselves together for every branch of public worship.

The Scriptural obligation of this is partly founded upon example, and partly upon precept; so that no person who admits that authority, can question this great duty without manifest and criminal inconsistency. The institution of public worship under the law; the practice of synagogue worship among the Jews, from at least the time of Ezra, (9) cannot be

questioned; both which were sanctioned by the practice of our Lord and his apostles. The course of the synagogue worship became indeed the model of that of the Christian Church. It consisted in prayer, reading and explaining the Scriptures, and singing of psalms; and thus one of the most important means of instructing nations, and of spreading and maintaining the influence of morals and religion among a people, passed from the Jews into all Christian countries.

(9) Some writers contend that synagogues were as old as the ceremonial law That they were ancient is proved from Acts 25:21, - "Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day."

The perceptive authority for our regular attendance upon public worship, is either inferential or direct. The command to publish the Gospel includes the obligation of assembling to hear it; the name by which a Christian society is

designated in Scripture, is a Church; which signifies an

"assembly" for the transaction of some business; and, in the case of a Christian assembly, the business must be necessarily spiritual, and include the sacred exercises of prayer, praise, and hearing the Scriptures. But we have more direct precepts, although the practice was obviously continued from Judaism, and was therefore consuetudinary. Some of the epistles of Paul are

commanded to be read in the Churches. The singing of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, is enjoined as an act of solemn worship, "to the Lord;" and St. Paul cautions the Hebrews that they

"forsake not the assembling of themselves together." The practice of the primitive age is also manifest from the epistles of St. Paul. The Lord's Supper was celebrated by the body of believers collectively; and this apostle prescribes to the Corinthians regulations for

the exercises of prayer and prophesying, "when they came together in the Church," - the assembly. The statedness and order of these "holy offices" in the primitive Church, appears also from the apostolical epistle of St. Clement: "We ought also, looking into the depths of the Divine knowledge, to do all things in order, whatsoever the lord hath commanded to be done. We ought to make our oblations, and perform our holy offices, at their appointed seasons; for these he hath commanded

to be done, not irregularly or by chance, but at determinate times and hours; as he hath likewise ordained by his supreme will, where, and by what persons, they shall be performed; that so all things being done according to his pleasure, may be acceptable in his sight." This passage is remarkable for urging a Divine authority for the public services of the Church, by which St. Clement, no doubt, means the authority of the inspired directions of the apostles.

The ends of the institution of public worship are of such obvious importance, that it must ever be considered as one of the most condescending and gracious dispensations of God to man. By this his Church con-fesses his name before the world; by this the public teaching of his word is associated with acts calculated to affect the mind with that solemnity which is the best preparation for hearing it to edification. It is thus that the ignorant and vicious are collected together, and instructed

and warned; the invitations of mercy are published to the guilty, and the sorrowful and afflicted are comforted. In these assemblies God, by his Holy Spirit, diffuses his vital and sanctifying influence, and takes the devout into a fellowship with himself, from which they derive strength to do and to suffer his will in the various scenes of life, while he thus affords them a foretaste of the deep and hallowed pleasures which are reserved for them at "his right hand for evermore." Prayers and

intercessions are here heard for national and public interests; and while the benefit of these exercises descends upon a country, all are kept sensible of the dependence of every public and personal interest upon God. Praise calls forth the grateful emotions, and gives cheerfulness to piety; and that "instruction in righteousness," which is so perpetually repeated, diffuses the principles of morality and religion throughout society; enlightens and gives activity to conscience; raises the

standard of morals; attaches shame to vice, and praise to virtue; and thus exerts a power, fully purifying influence upon mankind. Laws thus receive a force, which, in other circumstances, they could not acquire, even were they enacted in as great perfection; and the administration of justice is aided by the strongest possible obligation and sanction being given to legal oaths. The domestic relations are rendered more strong and interesting by the very habit of the attendance of

families upon the sacred services of the sanctuary of the Lord; and the rich and the poor meeting together there, and standing on the same common ground of sinners before God, equally dependent upon him, and equally suing for his mercy, has a powerful, though often an insensible, influence in humbling the pride which is nourished by superior rank, and in raising the lower classes above abjectness of spirit, without injuring their humility. Piety, benevolence, and patriotism, are equally

dependent for their purity and vigor upon the regular and devout worship of God in the simplicity of the Christian dispensation.

A few words on liturgies or forms of prayer may here have a proper place.

The necessity of adhering to the simplicity of the first age of the Church, as to worship, need scarcely be defended by argument. If no liberty were intended to be given to accommodate the modes of worship to the circumstances of different people and times, we should, no doubt, have

had some express directory on the subject in Scripture; but in the exercise of this liberty steady regard is to be paid to the spirit and genius and simple character of Christianity, and a respectful deference to the practice of the apostles and their immediate successors. Without these, formality and superstition, to both of which human nature is very liable, are apt to be induced; and when once they enter they increase, as the History of the Church sufficiently shows, indefinitely, until true

religion is buried beneath the mass of observances which have been introduced as her aids and handmaids. Our Lord's own words are here directly applicable and important: "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth." The worship must be adapted to the spiritual nature of God, and to his revealed perfections. To such a Being the number of prayers, the quantity of worship so to speak, to which corrupt Churches have attached so much

importance, can be of no value. As a Spirit, he seeks the worship of the spirit of man; and regards nothing external in that worship but as it is the expression of those emotions of humility, faith, gratitude, and hope, which are the principles he condescendingly approves in man. "True" worship, we are also taught by these words, is the worship of the heart; it springs from humility, faith, gratitude, and hope; and its final cause, or end, is to better man, by bringing upon his affections the sanctifying

and comforting influence of grace. The modes of worship which best promote this end and most effectually call these principles into exercise, are those therefore which best accord with our Lord's rule: and if in the apostolic age we see this end of worship most directly accomplished, and these emotions most vigorously and with greatest purity excited, the novelties of human invention can add nothing to the effect, and for that very reason have greatly diminished it. In the Latin and Greek

Churches we see a striking conformity in the vestments, the processions, the pictures, and images, and other parts of a complex and gorgeous ceremonial, to the Jewish typical worship, and to that of the Gentiles, which was an imitation of it without typical meaning. But it is not even pretended that in these circumstances it is founded upon primitive practice; or, if pretended, this is obviously an impudent assumption.

Liturgies, or forms of service, do not certainly

come under this censure, except when they contain superstitious acts of devotion to saints, or are so complicated, numerous, and lengthened, that the only principle to which they can be referred is the common, but unworthy notion, that the Divine Being is rendered placable by continued service; or that the wearisome exercise of vocal prayers, continued for long periods, and in painful postures, is a necessary penance to man, and, as such, acceptable to God. In those Reformed Churches of Christendom

in which they are used, they have been greatly abridged, as well as purified from the corruptions of the middle ages. In some they are more copious than in others, while many religious societies have rejected their use altogether; and in a few they are so used as to afford competent space also for extempore devotion.

The advocates and opponents of the use of forms of prayer in public worship have both run into

great extremes, and attempted generally to prove too much against each other.

If the use of forms of prayer in prose be objected to, their use in verse ought to be rejected on the same principle; and extemporaneous psalms and hymns must, for consistency's sake, be required of a minister, as well as extemporaneous prayers; or the practice of singing, as a part of God's worship, must be given up. Again: If the objection to the use of a form of prayer

be not in its matter; but merely as it contains petitions not composed by ourselves, or by the officiating minister on the occasion; the same objection would lie to our using any petitions found in the Psalms or other devotional parts of Scripture, although adapted to our case, and expressed in words far more fitting than our own. If we think recomposed prayers incompatible with devotion, we make it essential to devotion that we should frame our desires into our own

words: whereas nothing can be more plain, than that whoever has composed the words, if they correspond with our desires, they become the prayer of our hearts, and are, as such, acceptable to God. The objection to petitionary forms composed by others, supposes also that we know the things which it is proper for us to ask without the assistance of others. This may be sometimes the case; but as we must be taught what to pray for by the Holy Scriptures, so, in

proportion as we understand what we are authorized to pray for by those Scriptures, our prayers become more varied, and distinct, and comprehensive, and, therefore, edifying. But all helps to the understanding of the Scriptures, as to what they encourage us to ask of God, is a help to us in prayer. Thus the exposition of Christian privileges and blessings from the pulpit, affords us this assistance; thus the public extempore prayers we hear offered by ministers and enlightened

Christians, assist us in the same respect; and the written and recorded prayers of the wise and pious in different ages, fulfill the same office, and to so great an extent, that scarcely any who offer extempore prayer escape falling into phrases and terms of expression, or even entire petitions, which have been originally derived from liturgies. Even in extempore services, the child accustomed to the modes of precatory expression used by the parent, and the people to those of their

ministers, imitate them unconsciously; finding the desires of their hearts already embodied in suitable and impressive words.

The objection, therefore, to the use of forms of prayer, when absolute, is absurd, and involves principles which no one acts upon, or can act upon. It also disregards example and antiquity. The high priest of the Jews pronounced yearly a form of benediction. The Psalms of David, and other inspired Hebrew poets, whether

chanted or read makes no difference, were composed for the use of the sanctuary, and formed a part of the regular devotions of the people. Forms of prayer were used in the synagogue service of the Jews, which, though multiplied in subsequent times, so as to render the service tedious and superstitious, had among them some that were in use between the return from the captivity and the Christian era, and were therefore sanctioned by the practice of our Lord and his apostles. (Prideaux's

Connection. Fol. edit. vol. i, p. 304.) John Baptist appears also to have given a form of prayer to his disciples, in which he was followed by our Lord. The latter has indeed been questioned, and were it to be argued that our Lord intended that form of prayer alone to be used, too much would be proved by the advocates of forms. On the other hand, although the words, "after this manner pray ye," intimate that the Lord's prayer was given as a model of prayer, so the words in another evangelist, "when ye pray,

say," as fully indicate an intention to prescribe a form. It seems, therefore, fair, to consider the Lord's prayer as intended both as a model and a form; and he must be very fastidious who, though he uses it as the model of his own prayers, by paraphrasing its petitions in his own words, should scruple to use it in its native simplicity and force as a form. That its use as a form, though not its exclusive use, was originally intended by our Lord, appears, I think, very clearly, from the disciples

desiring to be taught to pray, "as John taught his disciples." If, as it has been alleged, the Jewish rabbins, at so early a period, were in the custom of giving short forms of prayer to their disciples, to be used in the form given, or to be enlarged upon by the pupil at his pleasure, this would fully explain the request of the disciples. However, without laying much stress upon the antiquity of this practice, we may urge, that if John Baptist gave a form of prayer to his followers, the conduct of our Lord in teaching his disciples to

pray, by what is manifestly a regularly connected series of petitions, is accordant with their request; but if the Baptist only taught what topics ought to be introduced in prayer, and the disciples of Jesus wished to be instructed in like manner, it is difficult to account for their request being granted, not by his giving directions as to the topics of prayer, but by his uttering a regular prayer itself. That our Lord intended that prayer to be used as adapted to that period of his dispensation;

and that the petitions in that form are admirably applicable to every period of Christianity, and may be used profitably; and that its use implies a devout respect to the words of Him "who spake as never man spake;" are points from which there does not appear any reasonable ground of dissent.

The practice of the primitive Church may also be urged in favor of liturgies. Founded as the early worship of Christians was, upon the model of the synagogue, the use of short

forms of prayer, or collects, by them, is at least probable. It must indeed be granted that extended and regular liturgies were of a later date; and that extempore prayers were constantly offered in their assemblies for public worship. This appears clear enough from several passages in St. Paul's epistles, and the writings of the fathers; so that no liturgical service can be so framed as entirely to shut out, or not to leave convenient space for, extempore prayer by the minister without departing

from the earliest models. But the Lord's prayer appears to have been in frequent use in the earliest times, and a series of collects; which seems allowed even by Lord King, although he proves that the practice for the minister to pray "according to his ability," (1) that is, to use his gifts in extempore prayer, was a constant part of the public worship in the first ages.

(1) This expression occurs in Justin Martyr's Second Apology, where he

particularly describes the mode of primitive worship.

Much, therefore, is evidently left to wisdom and prudence in a case where we have no explicit direction in the Scriptures; and as a general rule to be modified by circumstances, we may perhaps with safety affirm, that the best mode of public worship is that which unites a brief Scriptural liturgy with extempore prayers by the minister. This will more clearly appear if we consider the exceedingly futile character of those

objections which have been reciprocally employed by the opponents and advocates of forms, when they have carried their views to an extreme.

To public liturgies it has been objected, that "forms of prayer composed in one age become unfit for another, by the unavoidable change of language, circumstances, and opinions." To this it may be answered, 1. That whatever weight there may be in the objection, it can only apply to cases where the form is, in all its parts,

made imperative upon the officiating minister; or where the Church imposing it, neglects to accommodate the liturgy to meet all such changes, when innocent. 2. That the general language of no form of prayer among ourselves, has become obsolete in point of fact; a few expressions only being, according to modern notions, uncouth, or unusual. 3. That the petitions they contain are suited, more or less, to all men at all times, whatever may be their "circumstances;" and that

as to "opinions," if they so change in a Church as to become unscriptural, it is an advantage arising out of a public form, that it is auxiliary to the Scriptures in bearing testimony against them; that a natural reverence for ancient forms tends to preserve their use, after opinions have become lax; and that they are sometimes the means of recovering a Church from error.

Another objection is, that the perpetual repetition of the same form of words

produces weariness and inattentiveness in the congregation. There is some truth in this; but it is often carried much too far. A devotional mind will not weary in the repetition of a Scriptural and well arranged liturgy, if not too long to be sustained by the infirmity of the body. Whether forms are used, or extempore prayer be practiced, effort and application of mind are necessary in the hearer to enter into the spirit of the words; and each mode is wearisome to the careless and indevout, though not,

we grant, in equal degrees. The objection, as far as it has any weight, would be reduced to nothing, were the liturgy repeated only at one service on the Sabbath, so that at the others the minister might be left at liberty to pray with more direct reference to the special circumstances of the people, the Church, and the world.

The general character which all forms of prayer must take, is a third objection; but this is not true absolutely of any liturgy, and much less of

that of the Church of England. All prayer must, and ought to be, general, because we ask for blessings which all others need as much as ourselves; but that particularity which goes into the different parts of a Christian's religious experience and conflicts, dangers and duties, is found very forcibly and feelingly expressed in that liturgy. That greater particularity is often needed than this excellent form of prayer contains, must, however, be allowed; and this, as well as prayer suited to occasional

circumstances, might be supplied by the more frequent use of extempore prayer, without displacing the liturgy itself. The objection, therefore, has no force, except when extempore prayer is excluded, or confined within too narrow a limit.

On the other hand, the indiscriminate advocates of liturgies have carried their objections to extempore prayer to a very absurd extreme. Without a liturgy the folly and enthusiasm of many, they say, is in danger of producing

extravagant or impious addresses to God; that a congregation is confused between their attention to the minister, and their own devotion, being ignorant of each petition before they hear it; and to this they add the laboring recollection or tumultuous delivery of many extempore speakers. The first and third of these objections can have force only where foolish, enthusiastic, and incompetent ministers are employed; and so the evil, which can but rarely exist, is easily remedied. The second objection lay as

forcibly against the inspired prayers of the Scriptures at the time they were first uttered, as against extempore prayers now; and it would lie against the use of the collects and occasional unfamiliar forms of prayer introduced into the regular liturgy, in the case of all who are not able to read, or who happen not to have prayer books. We may also observe, that if evils of so serious a kind are the necessary results of extempore praying; if devotion is hindered, and pain and confusion of mind

produced; and impiety and enthusiasm promoted; it is rather singular that extempore prayer should have been so constantly practiced in the primitive Church, and that it should not have been wholly prohibited to the clergy on all occasions, in later times. The facts, however, of our own age prove that there is, to say the least, an equal degree of devotion, an equal absence of confusedness of thought in the worshippers, where no liturgy is used, as where extempore prayer is unknown.

Instances of folly and enthusiasm are also but few in the ministry of such Churches; and when they occur they have a better remedy than entirely to exclude extempore prayers by liturgies, and thus to shut out the great benefits of that mode of worship, for the loss of which no exclusive form of service can atone.

The whole, we think, comes to this, - that there are advantages in each mode of worship; and that, when combined prudently, the public service of the

sanctuary has its most perfect constitution. Much, how-ever, in the practice of Churches is to be regulated by due respect to differences of opinion, and' even to prejudice, on a point upon which we are left at liberty by the Scriptures, and which must therefore be ranked among things prudential. Here, as in many other things, Christians must give place to each other, and do all things "in charity."

praise and thanksgiving are implied in prayer, and included indeed in our

definition of that duty, as given above. But beside those ascriptions of praise and expressions of gratitude, which are to be mingled with the precatory part of our devotions, solemn psalms and hymns of praise, to be sung with the voice, and accompanied with the melody of the heart, are of apostolic injunction, and form an important and exhilarating part of the worship of God, whether public or social. It is thus that God is publicly acknowledged as the great source of all good, and the end to which all good ought

again to tend in love and obedience; and the practice of stirring up our hearts to a thankful remembrance of his goodness, is equally important in its moral influence upon our feelings now, and as it tends to prepare us for our eternal enjoyment hereafter. "Prayer," says a divine of the English Church, "awakens in us a sorrowful sense of wants and imperfections, and confession induces a sad remembrance of our guilt and miscarriages; but thanksgiving has nothing in it but a warm sense of

the mightiest love, and the most endearing goodness, as it is the overflow of a heart full of love, the free sally and emission of soul, that is captivated and endeared by kindness. To laud and magnify the Lord is the end for which we were born, and the heaven for which we were designed; and when we are arrived to such a vigorous sense of Divine love as the blessed inhabitants of heaven have attained, we shall need no other pleasure or enjoyment to make us for ever happy, but only to sing eternal

praises to God and the Lamb; the vigorous relish of whose unspeakable good-less to us will so inflame our love, and animate our gratitude, that to eternal ages we shall never be able to refrain from breaking out into new songs of praise, and then every new song will create a new pleasure, and every new pleasure create a new song." (Dr. Scott.)

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52 THE DUTIES WE OWE TO GOD - THE LORD'S DAY

As we have just been treating of the public worship of Almighty God, so we may fitly add some remarks upon the consecration of one day in seven for that service, that it may be longer continued than on days in which the business of life calls for our exertions, and our minds be kept free from its distractions.

The obligation of a Sabbatical institution upon Christians, as well as the

extent of it, have been the subjects of much controversy. Christian Churches themselves have differed; and the theologians of the same Church. Much has been written upon the subject on each side, and much research and learning employed, sometimes to darken a very plain subject.

The circumstance, that the observance of a Sabbath is nowhere, in so many words, enjoined upon Christians, by our Lord and his apostles, has been assumed as the reason for

so great a license of criticism and argument as that which has been often indulged in to unsettle the strict, ness of the obligation of this duty. Its obligation has been represented as standing upon the ground of inference only, and therefore of human opinion; and thus the opinion against Sabbatical institutions has been held up as equally weighty with the opinion in their favor; and the liberty which has been claimed, has been too often hastily concluded to be Christian liberty. This, however, is traveling much

too fast; for if the case were as much a matter of inference, as such persons would have it, it does not follow that every inference is alike good; or that the opposing inferences have an equal force of truth, any more than of piety.

The question respects the will of God as to this particular point, - whether one day in seven is to be wholly devoted to religion, exclusive of worldly business and worldly pleasures? Now, there are but two ways in which the will of God can be collected

from his word; either by some explicit injunction upon all, or by incidental circumstances. Let us then allow for a moment, that we have no such explicit injunction; yet we have certainly none to the contrary: let us allow that we have only for our guidance in inferring the will of God in this particular, certain circumstances declarative of his will; yet this important conclusion is inevitable, that all such indicative circumstances are in favor of a Sabbatical institution, and that there

is not one which exhibits any thing contrary to it. The seventh day was hallowed at the close of the creation; its sanctity was afterward marked by the withholding of the manna on that day, and the provision of a double supply on the sixth, and that previous to the giving of the law from Sinai: it was then made a part of that great epitome of religious and moral duty, which God wrote with his own finger on tables of stone; it was a part of the public political law of the only people to whom

Almighty God ever made him-self a political head and ruler; its observance is connected throughout the prophetic age with the highest promises, its violations with the severest maledictions; it was among the Jews in our Lord's time a day of solemn religious assembling, and was so observed by him; when changed to the first day of the week, it was the day on which the first Christians assembled; it was called, by way of eminence, "the Lord's day;" and we have inspired authority to say, that, both under the Old

and New Testament dispensations, it is used as an expressive type of the heavenly and eternal rest. Now, against all these circumstances so strongly declarative of the will of God, as to the observance of a Sabbatical institution, what circumstance or passage of Scripture can be opposed, as bearing upon it a contrary indication?

Truly not one; except those passages in St. Paul in which he speaks of Jewish Sabbaths, with their Levitical rites, and of a distinction of days, both of

which marked a weak or a criminal adherence to the abolished ceremonial dispensation; but which touch not the Sabbath as a branch of the moral law, or as it was changed, by the authority of the apostles, to the first day of the week.

If, then, we were left to determine the point by inference merely, how powerful is the inference as to what is the will of God with respect to the keeping of the Sabbath on the one hand, and how totally unsupported is the

opposite inference on the other!

It may also be observed, that those who will so strenuously insist upon the absence of an express command as to the Sabbath in the writings of the evangelists and apostles, as explicit as that of the decalogue, assume, that the will of God is only obligatory when manifested in some one mode, which they judge to be most fit. But this is a monstrous hypothesis; for however the will of God may be manifested, if it is

with such clearness as to exclude all reasonable doubt, it is equally obligatory as when it assumes the formality of legal promulgation. Thus the Bible is not all in the form of express and authoritative command; it teaches by examples, by proverbs, by songs, by incidental allusions and occurrences; and yet is, throughout, a manifestation of the will of God as to morals and religion in their various branches, and if disregarded, it will be so at every man's peril.

But strong as this ground is, we quit it for a still stronger. It is wholly a mistake that the Sabbath, because not re-enacted with the formality of the decalogue, is not explicitly enjoined upon Christians, and that the testimony of Scripture to such an injunction is not unequivocal and irrefragable. We shall soon prove that the Sabbath was appointed at the creation of the world, and consequently for all men, and therefore for Christians; since there was never any repeal of the

original institution. To this we add, that if the moral law be the law of Christians, then is the Sabbath as explicitly enjoined upon them as upon the Jews. But that the moral law is our law, as well as the law of the Jews, all but Antinomians must acknowledge; and few, we suppose, will be inclined to run into the fearful mazes of that error, in order to support lax notions as to the obligation of the Sabbath, into which, however, they must be plunged, if they deny the law of the decalogue to be

binding upon us. That it is so bound upon us, a few passages of Scripture will prove as well as many.

Our Lord declares, that he came not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfill. Take it, that by the "law," he meant both the moral and the ceremonial; ceremonial law could only be fulfilled in him, by realizing its types; and moral law, by upholding its authority. For "the prophets," they admit of a similar distinction; they either enjoin morality, or utter prophecies of Christ;

the latter of which were fulfilled in the sense of accomplishment, the former by being sanctioned and enforced. That the observance of the Sabbath is a part of the moral law, is clear from its being found in the decalogue, the doctrine of which our Lord sums up in the moral duties of loving God and our neighbor; and for this reason the injunctions of the prophets, on the subject of the Sabbath, are to be regarded as a part of their moral teaching. (See this stated more at large, part iii, chap, i.) Some

divines have, it is true, called the observance of the Sabbath a positive, and not a moral precept. If it were so, its obligation is precisely the same, in all cases where God himself has not relaxed it; and if a positive precept only, it has surely a special eminence given to it, by being placed in the list of the ten commandments, and being capable, with them, of an epitome which resolves them into the love of God and our neighbor. (See vol. ii, p. 5.) The truth seems to be, that it is a mixed precept, and not wholly

positive; but intimately, perhaps essentially, connected with several moral principles, of homage to God, and mercy to men; with the obligation of religious worship, of public religious worship, and of undistracted public worship: and this will account for its collocation in the decalogue with the highest duties of religion, and the leading rules of personal and social morality.

The passage from our Lord's sermon on the mount, with its context, is a

sufficiently explicit enforcement of the moral law, generally, upon his followers; but when he says, "The Sabbath was made for man," he clearly refers to its original institution, as a universal law, and not to its obligation upon the Jews only, in consequence of the enactments of the law of Moses. It "was made for man" not as he may be a Jew or a Christian; but as man, a creature bound to love, worship, and obey his God and Maker, and on his trial for eternity.

Another explicit proof that the law of the ten commandments, and, consequently, the law of the Sabbath, is obligatory upon Christians, is found in the answer of the apostle to an objection to the doctrine of justification by faith, Rom. 3:31, "Do we then make void the law through faith?"

which is equivalent to asking, Does Christianity teach, that the law is no longer obligatory on Christians, because it teaches that no man can be justified by it? To this he

answers in the most solemn form of expression, "God forbid; yea, we establish the law." Now, the sense in which the apostle uses the term, "the law," in this argument, is indubitably marked in chap. 7:7, "I had not known sin but by the law; for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet:" which being a plain reference to the tenth command of the decalogue, as plainly shows that the decalogue is "the law" of which he speaks. This, then, is the law which is "established"

by the Gospel; and this can mean nothing else than the establishment and confirmation of its authority, as the rule of all inward and outward holiness. Whoever, therefore, denies the obligation of the Sabbath on Christians, denies the obligation of the whole decalogue; and there is no real medium between the acknowledgment of the Divine authority of this sacred institution, as a universal law, and that gross corruption of Christianity, generally designated Antinomianism.

Nor is there any force in the dilemma into which the anti-Sabbatarians would push us, when they argue, that, if the case be so, then are we bound to the same circumstantial exactitude of obedience as to this command, as to the other precepts of the decalogue; and, therefore, that we are bound to observe the seventh day, reckoning from Saturday, as the Sabbath day. But, as the command is partly positive, and partly moral, it may have circumstances which are capable of being altered in perfect accordance with

the moral principles on which it rests, and the moral ends which it proposes. Such circumstances are not indeed to be judged of on our own authority.

We must either have such general principles for our guidance as have been revealed by God, and cannot therefore be questioned, or some special authority from which there can be no just appeal.

Now, though there is not on record any Divine command issued to the apostles, to change the

Sabbath from the day on which it was held by the Jews, to the first day of the week; yet, when we see that this was done in the apostolic age, and that St. Paul speaks of the Jewish Sabbaths as not being obligatory upon Christians, while he yet contends that the whole moral law is obligatory upon them; the fair inference is, that this change of the day was made by Divine direction. It is at least more than inference, that the change was made under the sanction of inspired men; and those men, the

appointed rulers in the Church of Christ; whose business it was to "set all things in order," which pertained to its worship and moral government. We may rest well enough, therefore, satisfied with this, - that as a Sabbath is obligatory upon us, we act under apostolic authority for observing it on the first day of the week, and thus commemorate at once the creation and the redemption of the world.

Thus, even if it were conceded, that the change of the day was made by the

agreement of the apostles, without express directions from Christ, (which is not probable,) it is certain that it was not done without express authority confided to them by Christ; but it would not even follow from this change that they did in reality make any alteration in the law of the Sabbath, either as it stood at the time of its original institution at the close of the creation, or in the decalogue of Moses. The same portion of time which constituted the seventh day from the creation, could not be observed in all parts

of the earth; and it is not probable, therefore, that the original law expresses more, than that a seventh day, or one day in seven, the seventh day after six days of labor, should be thus appropriated, from whatever point the enumeration might set out, or the hebdomadal cycle begin. For if more had been intended, then it would have been necessary to establish a rule for the reckoning of days themselves, which has been different in different nations; some reckoning from evening to evening, as

the Jews now do; others from midnight to midnight, &c. So that those persons in this country and in America, who hold their Sabbath on Saturday, under the notion of exactly conforming to the Old Testament, and yet calculate the days from midnight to midnight, have no assurance at all that they do not desecrate a part of the original Sabbath, which might begin, as the Jewish Sabbath now, on Friday evening; and on the contrary, hallow a portion of a common day, by

extending the Sabbath beyond Saturday evening.

Even if this were ascertained, the differences of latitude and longitude would throw the whole into disorder; and it is not probable that a universal law should have been fettered with that circumstantial exactness, which would have rendered difficult, and sometimes doubtful, astronomical calculations necessary in order to its being obeyed according to the intention of the Lawgiver.

Accordingly we find, says Mr. Holden, that

"In the original institution it is stated in general terms, that God blessed and sanctified the seventh day, which must undoubtedly imply the sanctity of every seventh day; but not that it is to be subsequently reckoned from the first demiurgic day. Had this been included in the command of the Almighty, something, it is probable, would have been added declaratory of the intention; whereas

expressions the most undefined are employed; not a syllable is uttered concerning the order and number of the days; and it cannot reasonably be disputed that the command is truly obeyed by the separation of every seventh day, from common to sacred purposes, at whatever given time the cycle may commence. The difference in the mode of expression here from that which the sacred historian has used in the first chapter, is very remarkable. At the conclusion of each division

of the work of creation, he says, 'The evening and the morning were the first day,' and so on; but at the termination of the whole, he merely calls it the seventh day; a diversity of phrase, which, as it would be inconsistent with every idea of inspiration to suppose it undesigned, must have been intended to denote a day, leaving it to each people as to what manner it is to be reckoned. The term obviously imports the period of the earth's rotation round its axis,

while it is left undetermined, whether it shall be counted from evening or morning, from noon or midnight. The terms of the law are, 'Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.' With respect to time, it is here

mentioned in the same indefinite manner as at its primeval institution, nothing more being expressly required than to observe a day of sacred rest after every six days of labor.

The seventh day is to be kept holy; but not a word is said as to what epoch the commencement of the series is to be referred; nor could the Hebrews have determined from the decalogue what day of the week was to be kept as their Sabbath. The precept is not, Remember the

seventh day of the week, to keep it holy, but 'Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy;' and in the following explication of these expressions, it is not said that the seventh day of the week is the Sabbath, but without restriction, ½The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God;' not the seventh according to any particular method of computing the septenary cycle; but, in reference to the six before mentioned, every seventh day in rotation after six of labor." (Holden on the Sabbath.) Thus that part of

the Jewish law, the decalogue, which, on the authority of the New Testament, we have shown to be obligatory upon Christians, leaves the computation of the hebdomadal cycle undetermined; and, after six days of labor, enjoins the seventh as the Sabbath, to which the Christian practice as exactly conforms as the Jewish. It is not, however, left to every individual to determine which day should be his Sabbath, though he should fulfill the law so far as to abstract the

seventh part of his time from labor. It was ordained for worship, for public worship; and it is therefore necessary that the Sabbath should be uniformly observed by a whole community at the same time. The Divine Legislator of the Jews interposed for this end, by special direction, as to his people. The first Sabbath kept in the wilderness was calculated from the first day in which the manna fell; and with no apparent reference to the creation of the world.

By apostolic authority, it is now fixed to be held on the first day of the week; and thus one of the great ends for which it was established, that it should be a day of "holy convocation," is secured.

The above observations proceed upon the ground, that the Sabbath, according to the fair interpretation of the words of Moses, was instituted upon the creation of the world. But we have had divines of considerable eminence in the English Church, who have attempted to disprove

this. 'The reason of the zeal displayed by some of them on this question may be easily explained.

All the Churches of the reformation did not indeed agree in their views of the Sabbath; but the reformers of England and Scotland generally adopted the strict and Scriptural view; and after them the Puritans. The opponents of the Puritans, in their controversies with them, and especially after the restoration, associated a strict observance of the Sabbath with hypocrisy

and disaffection; and no small degree of ingenuity and learning was employed to prove, that, in the intervals of public worship, pleasure or business might be lawfully pursued; and that this Christian festival stands on entirely different grounds from that of the Jewish Sabbath. The appointment of a Sabbath for man, at the close of the creation, was unfriendly to this notion; and an effort there-fore was made to explain away the testimony of Moses in the book of Genesis, by alleging that the Sabbath is there

mentioned by prolepsis or anticipation. Of the arguments of this class of divines, Paley availed himself in his "Moral Philosophy," and has become the most popular authority on this side of the question.

Paley's argument is well summed up, and satisfactorily answered, in the able work which has been above quoted.

"Among those who have held that the Pentateuchal record, above cited, is proleptical, and that the Sabbath is to be considered

a part of the peculiar laws of the Jewish polity, no one has displayed more ability than Dr. Paley. Others on the same side have exhibited far more extensive learning, and have exercised much more patient research; but for acuteness of intellect, for coolness of judgment, and a habit of perspicacious reasoning, he has been rarely, if ever, excelled. The arguments which he has approved, must be allowed to be the chief strength of the cause; and, as he is at once the most judicious and most popular of its

advocates, all that he has advanced demands a careful and candid examination. The doctrine which he maintains is, that the Sabbath was not instituted at the creation; that it was designed for the Jews only; that the assembling upon the first day of the week for the purpose of public worship, is a law of Christianity, of Divine appointment; but that the resting on it longer than is necessary for attendance on these assemblies, is an ordinance of human institution; binding, nevertheless,

upon the conscience of every individual of a country in which a weekly Sabbath is established, for the sake of the beneficial purposes which the public and regular observance of it promotes, and recommended perhaps, in some degree, to the Divine approbation, by the resemblance it bears to what God was pleased to make a solemn part of the law which he delivered to the people of Israel, and by its subservience to many of the same uses. Such is the doctrine of this very able writer in his Moral and

Political Philosophy; a doctrine which places the Sabbath on the footing of civil laws, recommended by their expediency, and which, being sanctioned by so high an authority, has probably given great encouragement to the lax notions concerning the Sabbath which unhappily prevail.

"Dr. Paley's principal argument is, that the first institution of the Sabbath took place during the sojourning of the Jews in the wilderness. Upon the complaint of the people for

want of food, God was pleased to provide for their relief by a miraculous supply of manna, which was found every morning upon the ground about the camp: 'And they gathered it every morning, every man according to his eating; and when the sun waxed hot, it melted. And it came to pass, that on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one man; and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. And he said unto them, This is that which the Lord hath said, To-morrow is the rest of

the holy Sabbath unto the Lord; bake that which ye will bake today, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you, to be kept until the morning. And they laid it up till the morning, as Moses bade; and it did not stink, (as it had done before, when some of them left it till the morning,) neither was there any worm therein. And Moses said, Eat that to day; for to day is a Sabbath unto the Lord; to day ye shall not find it in the field. Six days ye shall gather it, but on the seventh day, which is

the Sabbath, in it there shall be none. And it came to pass, that there went out some of the people on the seventh day for to gather, and they found none. And the Lord said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep my commandments, and my laws? See, for that the Lord hath given you the Sabbath, there, fore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days; abide ye every man in his place; let no man go out of his place on the seventh day. So the people rested on the seventh day,'

"From this passage, Dr. Paley infers that the Sabbath was first instituted in the wilderness; but to preclude the possibility of misrepresenting his argument, I will quote his own words: 'Now, in my opinion, the transaction in the wilderness above recited, was the first actual institution of the Sabbath. For if the Sabbath had been instituted at the time of the creation, as the words in Genesis may seem at first sight to import; and if it had been observed all along from that time to the departure of the Jews out

of Egypt, a period of about two thousand five hundred years; it appears unaccountable that no mention of it, no occasion of even the obscurest allusion to it, should occur, either in the general history of the world before the call of Abraham, which contains, we admit, only a few memoirs of its early ages, and those extremely abridged; or, which is more to be wondered at, in that of the lives of the first three Jewish patriarchs, which, in many parts of the account, is sufficiently circumstantial and

domestic. Nor is there, in the passage above quoted from the sixteenth chapter of Exodus, any intimation that the Sabbath, when appointed to be observed, was only the revival of an ancient institution, which had been neglected, forgotten, or suspended; nor is any such neglect imputed either to the inhabitants of the old world, or to any part of the family of Noah; nor, lastly, is any permission recorded to dispense with the institution during the captivity of the Jews in

Egypt, or on any other public emergency.'

"As to the first part of this reasoning, if it were granted that in the history of the patriarchal ages no mention is made of the Sabbath, nor even the obscurest allusion to it, it would be unfair to conclude that it was not appointed previous to the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt. If instituted at the creation, the memory of it might have been forgotten in the lapse of time and the growing corruption of the

world; or, what is more probable, it might have been observed by the patriarchs, though no mention is made of it in the narrative of their lives, which, however circumstantial in some particulars, is, upon the whole, very brief and compendious.

There are omissions in the sacred history much more extraordinary. Excepting Jacob's supplication at Bethel, scarcely a single allusion to prayer is to be found in all the Pentateuch; yet

considering the eminent piety of the worthies recorded in it, we cannot doubt the frequency of their devotional exercises. Circumcision being the sign of God's covenant with Abraham, was beyond all question punctually observed by the Israelites, yet, from their settlement in Canaan, no particular instance is recorded of it till the circumcision of Christ, comprehending a period of about one thousand five hundred years. No express mention of the Sabbath occurs in the books of Joshua,

Judges, Ruth, the first and second of Samuel, or the first of Kings, though it was, doubtless, regularly observed all the time included in these histories. In the second book of Kings, and the first and second of Chronicles, it is mentioned only twelve times, and some of them are merely repetitions of the same instance. If the Sabbath is so seldom spoken of in this long historical series, it can be nothing wonderful if it should not be mentioned in the summary account of the patriarchal ages.

"But though the Sabbath is not expressly mentioned in the history of the antediluvian and patriarchal ages, the observance of it seems to be intimated by the division of time into weeks. In relating the catastrophe of the flood, the historian informs us, that Noah, at the end of forty days opened the window of the ark; 'and he stayed yet other seven days, and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark; and the dove came in to him in the evening, and, lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf,

plucked off. So Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth. And he stayed yet other seven days, and sent forth the dove, which returned not again unto him any more.' The term 'week' is used by Laban in reference to the nuptials of Leah, when he says,

'Fulfill her week, and we will give thee this also, for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years.' A week of days is here plainly signified, the same portion of time which, in

succeeding ages, was set apart for nuptial festivities, as appears from the book of Esther, where the marriage feast of Vashti lasted seven days, and more particularly from the account of Samson's marriage feast. Joseph and his brethren mourned for their father Jacob seven days.

"That the computation of time by weeks obtained from the most remote antiquity, appears from the traditionary and written records of all nations, the numerous and undeniable

testimonies of which have been so often collected and displayed, that it would be worse than useless to repeat them.

"Combining all these testimonies together, they fully establish the primitive custom of measuring time by the division of weeks; and prevailing as it did among nations separated by distance, having no mutual intercourse, and wholly distinct in manners, it must have originated from one common source, which cannot reasonably be supposed any other than

the memory of the creation preserved in the Noahic family, and handed down to their posterities. The computation by days, months, and years, arises from obvious causes, the revolution of the moon, and the annual and diurnal revolutions of the sun; but the division of time by periods of seven days, has no foundation in any natural or visible septenary change; it must, therefore, have originated from some positive appointment, or some tradition anterior to the dispersion of mankind, which cannot well be any

other than the memory of the creation and primeval blessing of the seventh day.

"Dr. Paley's next argument is, that 'there is not in the sixteenth chapter of Exodus any intimation that the Sabbath, when appointed to be observed, was only the revival of an ancient institution which had been neglected, forgotten, or suspended.' The contrary, however, seems the more natural inference from the narrative. It is mentioned exactly in the way an historian would, who had

occasion to speak of a well-known institution. For instance, when the people were astonished at the double supply of manna on the sixth day, Moses observes, 'This is that which the Lord hath said, To-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord;' which, as far as we know, was never said previously to this transaction, but at the close of the creation. This, surely, is the language of a man referring to a matter with which the people were already acquainted, and recalling it to their

remembrance. In the fifth verse, God promises on the sixth day twice as much as they gather daily. For this no reason is given, which seems to imply that it was already known to the children of Israel. Such a promise, with, out some cause being assigned for so extraordinary a circumstance, would have been strange indeed; and if the reason had been, that the seventh day was now for the first time to be appointed a festival, in which no work was to be done, would not the author have stated this

circumstance? Again, it is said, 'Six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day, which is the Sabbath, in it there shall be none;' and 'for that the Lord hath given you the Sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days.'

Here the Sabbath is spoken of as an ordinance with which the people were familiar. A double quantity of manna was given on the sixth day, because the following day, as they well knew, was the Sabbath in which God rested from his

work, and which was to be kept as a day of rest, and holy to the Lord. It is likewise mentioned incidentally, as it were, in the recital of the miraculous supply of manna, without any notice of its being enjoined upon that occasion for the first time; which would be a very surprising circumstance, had it been the original establishment of the Sabbath. In short, the entire phraseology in the account of this remarkable transaction accords with the supposition, and with it

alone, that the Sabbath had been long established, and was well known to the Israelites.

"That no neglect of the Sabbath is 'imputed either to the inhabitants of the old world, or to any of the family of Noah,' is very true; but, so far from there being any proof of such negligence, there is, on the contrary, as we have seen, much reason for believing that it was duly observed by the pious Sethites of the old world, and after the deluge, by the virtuous line of Shem. True, likewise, it

is, that there is not ' any permission recorded to dispense with the institution during the captivity of the Jews in Egypt, or on any other public emergency," But where is the evidence that such a permission would be consistent with the Divine wisdom? And if not, none such would either be given or recorded. At any rate, it is difficult to see how the silence of Scripture concerning such a circumstance, can furnish an argument in vindication of the opinion, that the Sabbath was first

appointed in the wilderness. - To allege it for this purpose, is just as inconclusive as it would be to argue that the Sabbath was instituted subsequent to the return of the Jews from Babylonia, because neither the observance of it, nor any permission to dispense with it, during the captivity, is recorded in Scripture.

"The passage in the second chapter of Genesis is next adduced by Dr. Paley, and he pronounces it not inconsistent with his opinion; ' for as the seventh

day was erected into a Sabbath, on account of God's resting upon that day from the work of creation, it was natural enough in the historian, when he had related the history of the creation, and of God's ceasing from it on the seventh day, to add, 'and God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it, because that on it he had rested from all his work which God had created and made;' although the blessing and sanctification, that is, the religious distinction and appropriation of that day

were not actually made till many ages afterward. The words do not assert, that God then ' blessed' and 'sanctified'

the seventh day, but that he blessed and sanctified it for that reason; and if any ask, why the Sabbath, or sanctification of the seventh day, was then mentioned, if it were not then appointed, the answer is at hand, the order of connection, and not of time, introduced the mention of the Sabbath in the history of the subject

which it was ordained to commemorate.'

"That the Hebrew historian, in the passage here referred to, uses a prolepsis or anticipation, and alludes to the Mosaical institution of the Sabbath, is maintained by some of the ancient fathers, by Waehner, Heidegger, Beausobre, by Le Clerc, Roserimuller, Geddes, Dawson, and other commentators, and by the general stream of those writers who regard the Sabbath as peculiar to the Jews. Yet this opinion is

built upon the assumption, that the book of Genesis was not written till after the giving of the law, which may be the fact, but of which most unquestionably there is no proof. But waiving this consideration, it is scarcely possible to conceive a greater violence to the sacred text, than is offered by this interpretation. It attributes to the inspired author the absurd assertion, that God rested on the seventh day from all his works which he had made, and therefore about two thousand five hundred years after, God

blessed and sanctified the seventh day. It may be as well imagined that God had finished his work on the seventh day, but rested on some other seventh day, as that he rested the day following the work of creation, and afterward blessed and sanctified another. Not the slightest evidence appears for believing that Moses followed 'the order of connection, and not of time,' for no reasonable motive can be assigned for then introducing the mention of it, if it was not then appointed. The design

of the sacred historian clearly is, to give a faithful account of the origin of the world; and both the resting on the seventh day, and the blessing it, have too close a connection to be separated: if the one took place immediately after the work of creation as concluded, so did the other. To the account of the production of the universe, the whole narrative is confined; there is no intimation of subsequent events, nor the most distant allusion to Jewish ceremonies; and it would be most astonishing if the writer deserted his

grand object to mention one of the Hebrew ordinances which was not appointed till ages afterward.

"But according to Dr. Geddes, the opinion of a prolepsis derives some confirmation from the original Hebrew, which he renders, ' On the sixth day God completed all the work which he had to do; and on the seventh day, ceased from doing any of his works. God, therefore, blessed the seventh day, and made it holy, because on it he ceased from all his

works, which he had ordained to do.' This version, he says, is ' in the supposition that the writer refers to the Jewish Sabbath:' of course it was designedly adapted to a hypothesis; but, notwithstanding this suspicious circumstance, it is not easy to determine how it differs in sense from the received translation, as it leaves the question entirely undecided when this blessing and sanctification took place. - The proposed version, however, is opposed by those in the Polyglott, and

by the generality of translators, who render the particle vau at the beginning of the third verse, as a copulative, not as an illative; and it is surprising how a sound Hebrew scholar can translate it otherwise. In short, nothing can be more violent and unnatural than the proleptical interpretation; and if we add, that it rests upon the unproved assumption, that the record in question was written after the delivery of the law, it must appear so devoid of critical support, as not to require a

moment's hesitation in rejecting it." (Holden on the Sabbath.)

So satisfactorily does it appear that the institution of the Sabbath is historically narrated in Genesis: and it follows from thence, that the law of the Sabbath is universal, and not peculiar to the Jews. God blessed and sanctified it, not certainly for himself, but for his creatures; that it might be a day of special blessing to them, and be set apart, not only from unholy acts, for they are forbidden on every

day; but from common uses. It was thus stamped with a hallowed character from the commencement, and in works of a hallowed character ought it therefore to be employed.

The obligation of a Sabbatical observance upon Christians being thus established, the inquiry which naturally follows, is, In what manner is this great festival, at once so ancient and so venerable, and intended to commemorate events so illustrious and so important to mankind, to

be celebrated? Many have spoken of the difficulty of settling rules of this kind; but this will ordinarily vanish, if we consent to be guided fully by the principles of Scripture.

We allow that it requires judgment, and prudence, and charity, and, above all, a mind well disposed to the spiritual employment of the Sabbath, to make a right application of the law. But this is the case with other precepts also; such, for instance, as the loving our neighbor as ourselves: with respect to which we

seldom hear any complaint of difficulty in the application.

But, even if some want of special direction should be felt, this can only affect minor details; and probably the matter has been so left by the Lawgiver, to "try us, and prove us, and to know what is in our heart." Something may have been reserved, in this case, for the exercise of spontaneous obedience; for that generous construction of the precept which will be dictated by devotion and gratitude; and for the

operation of a feeling of indignant shame, that the only day which God has reserved to himself, should be grudged to him, and trenched upon by every petty excuse of convenience, interest, or sloth, and pared down, and negotiated for, in the spirit of one who seeks to overreach another. Of this we may be assured, that he who is most anxious to find exceptions to the general rule, will, in most cases, be a defaulter upon even his own estimate of the general duty.

The only real difficulties with which men have entangled themselves, have arisen from the want of clear and decided views of the law of the Sabbath as it is a matter of express revelation. There are two extremes, either of which must be fertile of perplexity. The first is, to regard the Sabbath as a prudential institution, adopted by the primitive Church, and resting upon civil and ecclesiastical authority; a notion which has been above refuted. For if this theory be adopted, it is impossible to find

satisfactory rules, either in the Old or New Testament, applicable to the subject; and we may therefore cease to wonder at that variety of opinions, and those vacillations between duty and license, which have been found in different Churches, and among their theological writers. The difficulty of establishing any rule at all, to which conscience is strictly amenable, is then evident, and indeed entirely insuperable; and men in vain attempt to make a partial Sabbath by their own authority, when they

reject "the day which the Lord hath made." If, on the other hand, a proper distinction is not preserved between the moral law of the Jews, which re-enacts the still more ancient institution of the Sabbath, (a law we have seen to be obligatory upon all Christians, to the end of time,) and the political and ceremonial law of that people, which contains particular rules as to the observance of the Sabbath; fixing both the day on which it was to be held, viz. the seventh of the week, and issuing certain

prohibitions not applicable to all people; which branch of the Mosaic law was brought to an end by Christ, - difficulties will arise from this quarter. One difficulty will respect the day; another the hour of the diurnal circle from which the Sabbath must commence. Other difficulties will arise from the inconvenience or impossibility of accommodating the Judaical precepts to countries and manners totally dissimilar; and others, from the degree of civil delinquency and

punitive ness with which violations of the Sabbath ought to be marked in a Christian state. The kindling of fires, for instance, in their dwellings was forbidden to the Jews; but for extending this to harsher climates there is no authority. This rule would make the Sabbath a day of bodily suffering, and, in some cases, of danger.o health, which is inconsistent with that merciful and festival character which the Sabbath was designed every where to bear. The same observation may

apply to the cooking of victuals, which was also prohibited to the Jews by express command. To the gathering of sticks on the Sabbath the penalty of death was assigned, on one occasion, for reasons probably arising out of the theoretical government of the Jews; but surely this is no precedent for making the violation of the Sabbath a capital crime in the code of a Christian country.

Between the decalogue, and the political and ceremonial laws which followed, there is a marked

distinction. They were given at two different times, and in a different manner; and. above all, the former is referred to in the New Testament, as of perpetual obligation; the other as peculiar, and as abolished by Christ. It does not follow, however, from this, that those precepts in the Levitical code, which relate to the Sabbath, are of no use to us. They show us how the general law was carried into its detail of application by the great Legislator, who condescended to be at once a civil and an ecclesiastical

Governor of a chosen people; and though they are not in all respects binding upon us, in their full form, they all embody general interpretations of the fourth command of the decalogue, to which, as far as they are applicable to a people otherwise circumstanced, respect is reverently and devoutly to be had. The prohibition to buy and sell on the Sabbath is as applicable to us as to the Jews; so is that against traveling on the Sabbath, except for purposes of religion, which was allowed to them also. If we may

lawfully kindle fires in our dwellings, yet we may learn from the law peculiar to the Jews, to keep domestic services under restraint; if we may cook victuals for necessity and comfort, we are to be restrained from feasting; if violations of the Sabbath are not to be made capital crimes by Christian governors, the enforcement of a decent external observance of the rest of the Sabbath is a lawful use of power, and a part of the duty of a Christian magistrate.

But the rules by which the observance of the Sabbath is clearly explained, will be found in abundant copiousness and evidence in the original command; in the decalogue; in incidental passages of Scripture, which refer not so much to the political law of the Jews, as to the universal moral code; and in the discourses and acts of Christ, and his apostles: so that, independent of the Levitical code, we have abundant guidance. It is a day of rest from worldly pursuits; a day sanctified, that is, set apart for holy

uses, which are the proper and the only lawful occupations of the day; it is a day of public worship, or, as it is ex-pressed in the Mosaic law, "of holy convocation," or assembly;- a day for the exercise of mercy to man and beast;- a day for the devout commemoration, by religious acts and meditations, of the creation and redemption of the world; and, consequently, for the cultivation of that spirit which is suitable to such exercises, by laying aside all worldly cares and pleasures; to which holy

exercises there is to be a full appropriation of the seventh part of our time; necessary sleep, and engagements of real necessity, as explained by our Savior, only being excluded.

Works of charity and mercy were not excluded by the rigor of the Mosaic law, much less by the Christian dispensation. The rule of doing good on the Sabbath day has, however, sometimes been interpreted with too much laxity, without considering that such acts form no part

of the reason for which that day was sanctified, and that they are therefore to be grounded upon the necessity of immediate exertion. The secularity connected with certain public charities has often been pushed beyond this rule of necessity, and as such has become unlawful.

The reason generally given for this, is, that men cannot be found to give time on the week day to the management of such charities: and they will never be found, while the rule is brought down to

convenience. Men's principles are to be raised, and not the command lowered. And when ministers perseveringly do their duty, and but a few conscientious persons support them, the whole will be found practicable and easy. Charities are pressed either upon our feelings, or our interests, and sometimes on both; and when they become really urgent, time will be found for their management, without "robbing God," and laying down that most debasing of all principles, that our

sacrifices are to cost us nothing. The teaching of writing in Sunday schools has been pleaded for on the same assumed ground of necessity; but in all well and religiously conducted institutions of this kind it has been found quite practicable to accomplish the object in a lawful manner; and even if it had not, there was no obligation binding as to that practice, equal to that which binds us to obey the law of God. It is a work which comes not under any of our Lord's exceptions: it may be a benevolent thing;

but it has in it no character of mercy, either to the bodies or to the souls of men.

As to amusements and recreations, which, when "innocent" that is, we suppose, not "immoral,"

are sometimes pleaded for, by persons who advocate the serious observance of the Lord's day, but a few words are necessary. If to public worship we are to add a more than ordinary attention to the duties of the family and the closet, which all such persons allow, then there is little

time for recreation and amusement; and if there were, the heart which is truly impressed with duties so sacred, and has entered into their spirit, can have no relish for them. Against every temptation of this kind, the words of the pious Archbishop Dawes may serve as a salutary admonition:-

"Dost thou require of me, O Lord, but one day in seven for thy more especial service, when as all my times, all my days, are thy due tribute; and shall I grudge thee that one day?

Have I but one day in the week, a peculiar season of nurturing and training up my soul for heavenly happiness, and shall I think the whole of this too much, and judge my duties at an end, when the public offices of the Church are only ended? Ah! where, in such a case, is my zeal, my sincerity, my constancy, and perseverance of holy obedience? Where my love unto, my delight and relish in, pious performances? Would those that are thus but half Christians be content to be half saved?

Would those who are thus not far from the kingdom of heaven, be willing to be utterly excluded thence for arriving no nearer to a due observance of the Lord's day? Am I so afraid of sabbatizing with the Jews, that I carelessly omit keeping the day as a good Christian? Where can be the harm of over-doing in God's worship, suppose I could overdo? But when my Savior has told me, after I have done all, I am still an unprofitable servant, where is the hazard, where the possibility, of doing too

much; whereas in doing too little, in falling short of performing a due obedience on the Sabbath, I may also fall short of eternal life?"

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53 MORALS - DUTIES TO OUR NEIGHBOUR

When our duty to others is summed up in the general epitome of the second table, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself;" although love must be so taken as to include many other principles and acts,

yet we are thereby taught the source from which they truly spring, when performed evangelically, and also that universal charity is to be the habitual and reigning affection of the heart, in all our relations to our fellow creatures.

This affection is to be considered in its source.

That source is a regenerated state of mind. We have shown that the love of God springs from the gift of the Holy Ghost to those who are justified by faith in Christ, and that every sentiment which, in

any other circumstances, assumes this designation, is imperfect or simulated. We make the same remark as to the love of our neighbor. It is an imperfect or simulated sentiment, if it flow not from the love of God, the sure mark of a regenerate nature. We here also see the superior character of Christian morals, and of morals when kept in connection, as they ought always to be, with the doctrines of the Gospel, and their operation in the heart. There may, indeed, be a degree of natural benevolence; the

indirect influence of a benevolent nature may counteract the selfish and the malevolent feelings; and education when well directed, will come in to the aid of nature. Yet the principle, as a religious one, and in its full operation, can only result from a supernatural change of our nature, because that only can subdue those affections which counteract benevolence and charity in their efficient and habitual manifestations.

This affection is also to be considered in respect of

what it excludes It excludes all anger beyond that degree of resentment which a culpable action in another may call forth, in order to mark the sense we entertain of its evil, and to impress that evil upon the offender, so that we may lead him to repent of it, and forsake it. This seems the proper rule by which to distinguish lawful anger from that which is contrary to charity, and therefore malevolent and sinful. It excludes implacability; for if we do not promptly and generously forgive others their trespasses, this is

deemed to be so great a violation of that law of love which ought to bind men together, that our heavenly Father will not forgive us. It excludes all revenge; so that we are to exact no punishment of another for offences against ourselves: and though it be lawful to call in the penalties of the laws for crimes against society, yet this is never to be done on the principle of private revenge; but on the public ground, that law and government are ordained of God, which produces a case that comes under the inspired rule, "Vengeance

is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." It excludes all prejudice; by which is meant a harsh construction of men's motives and characters upon surmise, or partial knowledge of the facts, accompanied with an inclination to form an ill opinion of them in the absence of proper evidence. This appears to be what the Apostle Paul means, when he says, "Charity thinketh no evil." It excludes all censorioumess or evil speaking, when the end is not the correction of the offender, or when a declaration of the truth as

to one person is not required by our love and duty to another; for whenever the end is merely to lower a person in the estimation of others, it is resolvable solely into a splenetic and immoral feeling. It excludes all those aggressions, whether petty or more weighty, which may be made upon the interests of another, when the law of the case, or even the abstract right, might not be against our claim. These are always complex cases, and can but occasionally occur; but the rule which binds us to do

unto others as we would they should do unto us, binds us to act upon the benevolent view of the case; and to forego the rigidness of right.

Finally, it excludes, as limitations to its exercise, all those artificial distinctions which have been created by men, or by providential arrangements, or by accidental circumstances. Men of all nations, of all colors, of all conditions, are the objects of the unlimited precept, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Kind

feelings produced by natural instincts, by intercourse, by country, may call the love of our neighbor into warmer exercise as to individuals or classes of men, or these may be considered as distinct and special, though similar affections superadded to this universal charity; but as to all men, this charity is an efficient affection, excluding all ill will, and all injury.

But its active expression remains to be considered.

It is not a merely negative affection; but it brings forth rich and varied fruits. It produces a feeling of delight in the happiness of others, and thus destroys envy; it is the source of sympathy and compassion; it opens the hand in liberality for the supply of the wants of others; it gives cheerfulness to every service undertaken in the cause of others; it resists the wrong which may be inflicted upon them; and it will run hazards of health and life for their sakes. It has special respect to the spiritual interests and

salvation of men; and thus it instructs, persuades, reproves the ignorant and vicious; counsels the simple; comforts the doubting and perplexed; and rejoices in those gifts and graces of others, by which society may be enlightened and purified. The zeal of apostles, the patience of martyrs, the travels and labors of evangelists in the first ages, were all animated by this affection; and the earnestness of preachers in all ages, and the more private labors of Christians for the benefit of the souls

of men, with the operations of those voluntary associations which send forth missionaries to the heathen, or distributes Bibles and tracts, or conduct schools, are all its visible expressions before the world. A principle of philanthropy may be conceived to exist independent of the influence of active and efficient Christianity; but it has always expended itself either in good wishes, or, at most, in feeble efforts, chiefly directed to the mitigation of a little temporary external evil.

Except in connection with religion, and that the religion of the heart, wrought and maintained there by the acknowledged influences of the Holy Spirit, the love of mankind has never exhibited itself under such views and acts as those we have just referred to. It has never been found in characters naturally selfish and obdurate; has never disposed men to make great and painful sacrifices for others; never sympathized with spiritual wretchedness; never been called forth into its highest

exercises by considerations drawn from the immortal relations of man to eternity; never originated large plans for the illumination and moral culture of society; never fixed upon the grand object to which it is now bending the hearts, the interests, and hopes of the universal Church, the conversion of the world. Philanthropy, in systems of mere ethics, like their love of God, is a greatly inferior principle to that which is enjoined by Christianity, and infused by its influence;- another proof of the folly of

separating morals from revealed truth, and of the necessity of cultivating them upon evangelical principles.

The same conclusion will be established, if we consider those works of mercy which the principle of universal philanthropy will dictate, and which form a large portion of our "duty to our neighbor." It is more the design of this part of the present work, to exhibit the peculiar nature and perfection of the morals of Christianity, than to consider moral duties in

detail; and, therefore, it is only necessary to assume what is obvious to all, that the exercise of practical mercy to the needy and miserable, is a moral duty clearly revealed, including also the application of a part of our property to benefit mankind in other respects, as we have opportunity. But let us ask, under what rules can the quantum of our exertions in doing good to others be determined, except by the authority of revealed religion? It is clear that there is an antagonist principle of selfishness in

man, which counteracts our charities; and that the demands of personal gratification, and of family interests, and of show and expense in our modes of living, are apt to take up so large a share of what remains after our necessities, and the lawful demands of station, and a prudent provision for old age and for our families after our decease, are met, that a very small portion is wont to be considered as lawfully disposable, under all these considerations, for purposes of general beneficence. If we have no

rules or principles, it is clear that the most limited efforts may pass for very meritorious acts; or that they will be left to be measured only by the different degrees of natural compassion in man, or by some immoral principle, such as the love of human praise. There is nothing in any mere system of morals to direct in such cases; certainly nothing to compel either the principles or the heart. Here then we shall see also in how different a predicament this interesting branch of morality stands, when kept

in close and inseparable connection with Christianity. It is true, that we have no specific rule as to the quantum of our giving in the Scriptures; and the reason of this is not unapparent. Such a rule must have been branched out into an inconvenient number of detailed directions to meet every particular case; it must have respected the different and changing states of society and civilization; it must have controlled men's savings as well as giving, because the latter are dependent upon

them; it must have prescribed modes of dress, and modes of living: all which would have left cases still partially touched or wholly unprovided for, and the multiplicity of rules might have been a trap to our consciences, rather than the means of directing them. There is also a more general reason for this omission. The exercise of mercy is a work of the affections; it must have, therefore, something free and spontaneous in it; and it was designed to be voluntary, that the moral effect produced upon

society might be to bind men together in a softer bond, and to call forth reciprocally good affections. To this the stern character of particular laws would have been inimical. Christianity teaches mercy, by general principles, which at once sufficiently direct and leave to the heart the free play of its affections.

The general law is express and unequivocal: "As ye have opportunity do good unto all men, and especially to them that are of the household of faith."

"To do good and to communicate forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." A most important and influential principle, to be found in no mere system of ethics, is also contained in the revelation of a particular relation in which we all stand to God, and on which we must be judged at the last day. We are "stewards,"

"servants," to whom the great Master has committed his "goods," to be used according to his directions. We have

nothing, therefore, of our own, no right in property, except under the conditions on which it is committed to us; and we must give an account for our use of it, according to the rule. A rule of proportion is also in various passages of Scripture expressly laid down: "Where little is given, little is required; where much is given much is required." "For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not." It is a farther rule,

that our charities should be both cheerful and abundant.

"See that ye abound in this grace also," "not grudgingly, or of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver." These general rules and principles being laid down, the appeal is made to the heart, and men are left to the influence of the spiritual and grateful affections excited there. All the venerable examples of Scripture are brought to bear upon the free and liberal exercises of beneficence, crowned with

the example of our Savior: "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might become rich." An appeal is made to man's gratitude for the blessings of Providence to himself, and he is enjoined to give "as the Lord hath prospered him." Our fellow creatures are constantly presented to us under tender relations, as our "brethren;" or, more particularly, as "of the household of faith." Special promises are made of God's

favor and blessing, as the reward of such acts in the present life: "And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work;" and finally, although every notion of merit is excluded, yet the rewards of eternity are represented as to be graciously dispensed, so as specially to distinguish and honor every "work of faith," and "labor of love." Under so powerful an authority, so explicit a general directory, and so

effectual an excitement, is this branch of morality placed by the Gospel.

As our religion enjoins charity, so also it prescribes justice. As a mutual dependence has been established among men, so also there are mutual rights, in the rendering of which to each other, justice, when considered as a social virtue, consists.

Various definitions and descriptions of justice are found among moralists and jurists, of different degrees of importance and utility to

those who write, and to those who study, formal treatises on its collective or separate branches. The distribution of justice into ethical, economical, and political, is more suited to our purpose, and is sufficiently comprehensive. The first considers all mankind as on a level; the second regards them as associated into families, under the several relations of husband and wife, parents and children, masters and servants; and the third comprehends them as united into public states, and obliged to

certain duties, either as magistrates or people. On all these the rules of conduct in Scripture are explicit and forcible.

ethical justice, as it considers mankind as on a level, chiefly therefore respects what are usually called men's natural rights, which are briefly summed up in three, - life, property, and liberty.

The natural right to life is guarded by the precept, "Thou shalt not kill;" and it is also limited by the more ancient injunction to the sons of Noah, "Whoso

sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." In a state of society, indeed, this right may be farther limited by a government, and capital punishments be extended to other crimes, (as we see in the Mosaic law,) provided the law be equally binding on all offenders, and rest upon the necessity of the case, as determined by the good of the whole community; and also that in every country professing Christianity, the merciful as well as the righteous character of that religion be suffered to impress itself

upon its legislation. But against all individual authority the life of man is absolutely secured and not only so, but anger, which is the first principle of violence, and which proceeds first to malignity and revenge, and then to personal injuries, is prohibited, under the penalty of the Divine wrath: a lofty proof of the superior character of the Christian rule of justice.

In property, lawfully acquired, that is, acquired without injury to others, every man has also a

natural right. This right also may be restrained in society, without injustice, seeing it is but the price which every man pays for protection, and other advantages of the social state; but here also the necessity of the case, resting upon the benefit of the community, is to be the rule of this modification of the natural claim. The law too must lie equally upon all, caeteris paribus; and every individual whose right of property is thus interfered with must have his due share of the common advantage.

Against individual aggression the right of property is secured by the Divine law, "Thou shalt not steal;" and by another law which carries the restraint up to the very principle of justice in the heart, "Thou shalt not covet;" covetousness being that corrupt affection from which injuries done to others in their property arise. The Christian injunction, to be

"content with such things as we have," is another important security. The rule which hinds rulers and

governments in their interferences with this natural right of property, comes under the head of political justice.

Liberty is another natural right, which by individual authority, at least, cannot be interfered with.

Hence "man stealing," the object of which is to reduce another to slavery, by obtaining forcible possession of his person, and compelling his labor, is ranked with crimes of the greatest magnitude in the New Testament; and against it the special

vengeance of God is threatened. By the Jewish law also, it was punished with death. How far the natural right which every man has to his own liberty may, like the natural right to property, be restrained by public authority, is a point on which different opinions have been held. Prisoners of war were formerly considered to be absolute captives, the right of which claim is involved in the question of the right of war.

Where one can be justified, so may the other; since a

surrender of the person in war is the commutation of liberty for life.* In the more humane practice of modern warfare, an exchange of prisoners is effected; but even this supposes an acquired right on each side in the prisoners, and a commutation by an exchange. Should the progeny of such prisoners of war, doomed, as by ancient custom, to perpetual servitude, be also kept in slavery, and the purchase of slaves also be practiced, the question which then arises is one which tries the whole case

of slavery, as far as public law is concerned. Among the patriarchs there was a mild species of domestic servitude, distinct from that of captives of war. Among the Jews, a Hebrew might be sold for debt, or sell himself when poor, but only till the year of release. After that, his continuation in a state of slavery was perfectly voluntary. The Jews might, however, hold foreigners as slaves for life.

Michaelis has well observed, that, by the restrictions of his law, Moses remarkably

mitigated the rigors of slavery. "This is, as it were, the spirit of his laws respecting it. He appears to have regarded it as a hardship, and to have disapproved of its severities. Hence we find him, in Deut.

23:15, 16, ordaining, that no foreign servant, who sought for refuge among the Israelites, should be delivered up to his master." (Commentaries on the Laws of Moses.) This view of the case, we may add, will probably afford the reason why slavery was at

all allowed under the Jewish dispensation. The general state of society in the surrounding nations might perhaps render it a necessary evil; but in other countries it existed in forms harsh and oppressive, while the merciful nature of the Mosaic institute impresses upon it a mild and mitigated character, in recognition of man's natural rights, and as an example to other countries. And to show how great a contrast with our modern colonial slavery, the case of slaves among the Jews

presented, we may remark, that all foreign slaves were circumcised, and therefore initiated into the true religion; that they had the full and strict advantage of the Sabbath confirmed to them by express statute; that they had access to the solemn religious festivals of the Jews, and partook of the feasts made upon the offerings; that they could possess property, as appears from Lev. 25:49, and 2 Sam. 9:10; and that all the fruits which grew spontaneously during the Sabbatical year were given to them, and to the

indigent. Michaelis has also showed, that not only was the ox not muzzled when treading out the corn, but that the slaves and day laborers might eat without restraint of the fruits they were gathering in their master's service, and drink of the wine they pressed from the wine press.

(Commentaries on the Laws of Moses, art. 130.) The Jewish law may therefore be considered not so much as controlling the natural right which man has to liberty, and so authorizing the infraction

of that right under certain circumstances, but as coming in to regulate and to soften a state of things already existing, and grown into general practice. All, therefore, that can be fairly inferred from the existence of slavery under that law, is, that a legislature, in certain cases, may be justified in mitigating, rather than abolishing, that evil. But even here, since the Legislator was in fact God, whose right to dispose of his creatures cannot be questioned, and since also the nations neighboring to the Jews were under a

malediction because of their idolatries, the Jewish law can be no rule to a Christian state; and all arguments drawn from it in favor of perpetual slavery, suppose that a mere earthly legislature is invested with the powers and prerogatives of the Divine Legislator of the Jews, which of course vitiates the whole reasoning.

*Montesquieu says, "It is false that killing in war is lawful, unless in a case of absolute necessity: but when a man has made another his slave, he

cannot be said to have been under a necessity of taking away his life, since he actually did not take it away. War gives no other right over prisoners than to disable them from doing any farther harm, by securing their persons." And "if a prisoner of war is not to be reduced to slavery, much loss are his children." This reason therefore, with others, assigned by the civilians in justification of slavery, he concludes is "false."

(Spirit of Laws book xv, chap, ii.)-american editors.

As to the existence of slavery in Christian states, every government, as soon as it professes to be Christian, binds itself to be regulated by the principles of the New Testament; and though a part of its subjects should at that time be in a state of servitude, and their sudden emancipation might be obviously an injury to society at large, it is bound to show that its spirit and tendency is as inimical to slavery as is the Christianity which it professes. All the injustice and oppression against which it can guard that

condition, and all the mitigating regulations it can adopt, are obligatory upon it; and since also every Christian slave is enjoined by apostolic authority to choose freedom, when it is possible to attain it, as being a better state, and more befitting a Christian man, so is every Christian master bound, by the principle of loving his neighbor, and more especially his "brother in Christ," as himself, to promote his passing into that better and more Christian state. To the

instruction of the slaves in religion would every such Christian government also be bound, and still farther to adopt measures for the final extinction of slavery; the rule of its proceeding in this case being the accomplishment of this object as soon as is compatible with the real welfare of the enslaved portion of its subjects themselves, and not the consideration of the losses which might be sustained by their proprietors, which, however, ought to be compensated by other means, as far as they are

just, and equitably estimated.

If this be the mode of proceeding clearly pointed out by Christianity to a state on its first becoming Christian, when previously, and for ages the practice of slavery had grown up with it; how much more forcibly does it impose its obligation upon nations involved in the guilt of the modern African slavery! They professed Christianity when they commenced the practice. They entered upon a traffic which ab initio was, upon their own

principles, unjust and cruel. They had no rights of war to plead against the natural rights of the first captives; who were in fact stolen, or purchased from the stealers, knowing them to be so. The governments themselves never acquired any right of property in the parents; they have none in their descendants, and can acquire none; as the thief who steals cattle cannot, should he feed and defend them, acquire any right of property, either in them or the stock they may produce, although he should be at the charge of

rearing them. These governments not having a right of property in their colonial slaves, could not transfer any right of property in them to their present masters, for it could not give what it never had; nor by its connivance at the robberies and purchases of stolen human beings alter the essential injustice of the transaction. All such governments are therefore clearly bound, as they fear God and dread his displeasure, to restore all their slaves to the condition of free men. Restoration to their friends

and country is now out of the question; they are bound to protect them whore they are, and have the right to exact their obedience to good laws in return; but property in them they cannot obtain;- their natural right to liberty is untouched and inviolable. The manner in which this right is to be restored, we grant, is in the power of such governments to determine, provided that proceeding be regulated by the principles above laid down, - First, that the emancipation be sincerely determined upon, at some

time future: Secondly, that it is not delayed beyond the period which the general interest of the slaves themselves prescribes, and which is to be judged of benevolently, and without any bias of judgment, giving the advantage of every doubt to the injured party. Thirdly, that all possible means be adopted to render freedom a good to them. It is only under such circumstances that the continuance of slavery among us can cease to be a national sin, calling down, as it has done, and must do until a process of

emancipation be honestly commenced, the just displeasure of God.

What compensations may be justly claimed from the governments, that is, the public of those countries who have entangled themselves in this species of unjust dealing, by those who have purchased men and women whom no one had the right to sell, and no one had the right to buy, is a perfectly distinct question, and ought not to turn repentance and justice out of their course, or delay their operations for a

moment. Perhaps, such is the unfruitful nature of all wrong, that it may be found, that, as free laborers, the slaves would be of equal or more value to those who employ them, than at present. If otherwise, as in some degree "all have sinned," the real loss ought to be borne by all, when that loss is fairly and impartially ascertained; but of which loss, the slave interest, if we may so call it, ought in justice to bear more than an equal share, as having had the greatest gain. *

*The above paragraphs, under the last head, were obviously written with a view to states in which Christianity, as a system, is formally established by law and in which the acts of the government are officially based on this principle. - american editors.

The rules of Christian justice thus secure the three great natural rights of man; but it may be inquired whether he has himself the power of surrendering them at his own option?

And first with respect to life.

Since government is an institution of God, it seems obligatory upon all men to live in a social state; and if so, to each is conceded the right of putting his life to hazard, when called upon by his government to defend that state from domestic rebellion or foreign war. So also we have the power to hazard our lives to save a fellow creature from perishing. In times of persecution for religion, we are enjoined by our Lord to flee from one

city to another; but when flight is cut off, we have the power to surrender life rather than betray our allegiance to Christ. According to the apostle's rule, "we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren;" that is, for the Church and the cause of religion. In this case, and in some others, accompanied with danger to life, when a, plain rule of duty is seen to be binding upon us, we are not only at liberty to take the risk, but are bound to do it; since it is more our duty to obey God than to

take care of our health and life.

These instances of devotion have been by some writers called "suicides of duty," a phrase which may well be dispensed with, although the sentiment implied in it is correct.

On suicide, properly so called, that is self murder, our modern moralists have added little to what is advanced by the ethical writers of Greece and Rome, to prove its unlawfulness; for, though suicide was much practiced in those ancient states, and

sometimes commended, especially by the Stoics, it was occasionally condemned. "We men," says Plato, "are all by the appointment of God in a certain prison or custody, which we ought not to break out of, or run away." So likewise Cicero: "God, the supreme governor of all things, forbids us to depart hence without his order.

All pious men ought to have patience to continue in the body, as long as God shall please, who sent us hither; and not force themselves out of the world

before he calls for them, lest they be found deserters of the station appointed them by God."

This is the reasoning which has generally satisfied our moralists on this subject, with the exception of some infidel sophists, and two or three writers of paradoxes in the Established Church, who have defended suicide, or affected to do so. Paley has added some other considerations, drawn from his doctrine of general tendency, and from the duties which are deserted, the injuries brought upon

others, &c; but the whole only shows, that merely ethical reasoning furnishes but a feeble barrier against this offence against God, against society, and against ourselves, independent of the Holy Scriptures. There the prohibitions of a Divine law lie directly against this act, and also the whole spirit of that economy under which we are placed by almighty God.

It is very true, that, in the Old Testament history, we have a few instances of suicide among the Jews, which were not marked by

any penal visitation, as among modern nations, upon the remains of the deceased; such as the denial of honorable sepulture, &c. But this arose from the absence of all penalty in such cases in the Mosaic law. In this there was great reason; for the subject himself is by his own direful act put beyond the reach of human visitation; and every dishonor done to the inanimate corpse is only punishment inflicted upon the innocent survivors, who, in most cases, have a large measure of suffering

already entailed upon them. This was probably the humane reason for the silence of the Mosaic law as to the punishment of suicide.

But as the law of the two tables is of general moral obligation, although a part also of the municipal law of the Jews; as it concerned them as creatures, as well as subjects of the theocracy; it takes cognizance of acts not merely as prejudicial to society, but as offensive to God, and in opposition to his will as the ruler of the

world. The precept, therefore, "Thou shalt not kill," must be taken to forbid, not only murder properly so called, which is a crime against society, to be reached by human penalties, but also self destruction, which, though a crime also in a lower degree against society, no human penalties can visit, but is left, since the offender is out of the reach of man, wholly to the retribution of God. The absence of all post mortem penalties against suicide in the Mosaic law, is no proof, therefore, that it is not

included in the prohibition, "Thou shalt not kill," any more than the absence of all penalties in the same law against a covetous disposition, proves any thing against the precept, "Thou shalt not covet,"

being interpreted to extend to the heart of man, although violence's, thefts, and other instances of covetousness, in action only, are restrained in the Mosaic law by positive penalties. Some have urged it, however, as a great absurdity, to allege this

commandment as a prohibition of suicide.

"When a Christian moralist," says Dr. Whately, "is called on for a direct Scriptural precept against suicide, instead of replying that the Bible is not meant for a complete code of laws, but for a system of motives and principles, the answer frequently given is, ' Thou shalt do no murder.' Suicide, if any one considers the nature, and not the name of it, (self murder,) evidently wants the essential characteristic

of murder, viz. the hurt and injury done to one's neighbor, in depriving him of life, as well as to others by the insecurity they are in consequence liable to feel." (Elements of Logic.) All this might be correct enough, but for one error into which the writer has fallen, - that of assuming that the precept is, "Thou shalt do no murder;" for if that were the term used in the strict sense, we need not be told that suicide is not murder, which is only saying, that the killing one's self is not the killing another. The authorized

translation uses the word "kill" "thou shalt not kill" as better rendering the Hebrew word, which has a similar latitude of meaning, and is used to express fortuitous homicide, and the act of depriving of life generally, as well as murder, properly so called. That the prohibition respects the killing of others with criminal intent, all agree, and Moses describes, Numbers 1:35, the circumstances which make that killing so criminal as to be punishable with death; but that he included

the different kinds of homicide within the prohibition, is equally certain, because the Mosaic law takes cognizance of homicide, and provides for the due examination of its circumstances by the judges, and recognizes the custom of the Goel, or avenging of blood, and provides cities of refuge for the homicide; a provision which, however merciful, left the incautious manslayer subject to risks and inconveniences which had the nature of penalties. So tender was this law of the life of man! Moses,

however, as a legislator, applying this great moral table of laws to practical legislation, could not extend the penalties under this prohibition farther than to these two cases, because in cases of suicide the offender is out of the reach of human power; but, as we see the precept extended beyond the case of murder with criminal intention, to homicide, and that the word used in the prohibition, "Thou shalt not 'kill" is so indefinite as to comprehend every act by which man is deprived of life, when it has no

authority from God; it has been very properly extended by divines and Scriptural moralists, not only to homicide, but from that to suicide. This, indeed, appears to be its import, that it prohibits the taking away of human life in all cases, without authority from God, which authority he has lodged with human governments, the "powers ordained by him" for the regulation of mankind, in what relates to the peace and welfare of society; and whenever the life of man is taken away, except in cases sanctioned

by human governments, proceeding upon the rules and principle, of the word of God, then the precept, "Thou shalt not kill," is directly violated. Dr. Whately, in the passage above adverted to, objects to suicide being called self murder, because this criminal act has not the qualities of that by which the life of another is intentionally and maliciously taken away; but if the deliberate and intentional deprivation of another of life, without authority from the Divine law, and from human laws

established upon them, be that which, in fact, constitutes "murder," then is suicide entitled to be branded with the same odious appellation. The circumstances must, of necessity, differ; but the act itself has essentially the same criminality, though not in the same degree, - it is the taking away of the life of a human being, without the authority of God, the maker and proprietor of all, and therefore in opposition to, and defiance of, his authority. That suicide has very deservedly received

the morally descriptive appellation of self murder, will also appear from the reason given, in the first prohibition against murder, for making this species of violence a capital crime. In the precepts delivered to the sons of Noah, and, therefore, through them, to all their descendants, that is, to all mankind, that against murder is thus delivered, Gen. 9:6, Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God made he man"

There is in this reason a manifest reference to the dignity put upon human nature, by its being endowed with a rational and immortal spirit. The crime of murder is made to lie, therefore, not merely in the putting to death the animal part of man's nature, for this is merged in a higher consideration, which seems to be, the indignity done to the noblest of the works of God; and particularly, the value of life to an immortal being, accountable in another state for the actions done in this, and

which ought, for this very reason, to be specially guarded, since death introduces him into changeless and eternal relations, which were not to lie at the mercy of human passions. Such moralists as the writer above quoted, would restrain the essential characteristics of an act of murder to the "hurt done to a neighbor in depriving him of life," and the "insecurity"

inflicted upon society; but in this ancient and universal law, it is made

eminently to consist in contempt of the image of God in man, and its interference with man's immortal interests and relations as a deathless spirit; and if so, then suicide bears upon it these deep and awful characteristics of murder. It is much more wisely said by Bishop Kidder, in his remarks upon this passage, that the reason given, - "for in the image of God made he man," - is a farther aggravation of the sin of murder. It is a great trespass upon God, as it destroys his likeness; and

self-murder, upon this account, is forbidden as well as the killing of others.

Whatever weight may be due to the considerations urged by the moralists above quoted against this crime, - and every motive which may deter men from listening to the first temptation to so direful an act, is important, - yet the guards of Christianity must be acknowledged to be of a more powerful kind. For the principles of our religion cannot be understood without our perceiving, that, of almost

all other crimes, willful suicide ought most to be dreaded. It is a sin against God's authority. He is "the God of our life;" in "his hand our breath is;" and we usurp his sovereignty when we presume to dispose of it. As resulting from the pressure of mortifications of spirit, or the troubles of life, it becomes a sin, as arraigning his providential wisdom and good, ness. It implies either an Atheistic denial of God's government, or a rebellious opposition to his permissive acts or direct appointments; it cannot be

committed, therefore, when the mind is sound, but in the absence of all the Christian virtues, of humility, self denial, patience, and the fear and love of God, and only under the influence of pride, worldliness, forgetfulness of God, and contempt of him. It hides from the mind the realities of a future judgment, or it defies them; and it is consummated by the character of unpardonableness, because it places the criminal at once beyond the reach of mercy.

If no man has the right, then, to dispose of his own life by suicide, he has no right to hazard it in duels. The silence of the pulpits in those quarters where only the warning voice of the Christian preacher can be heard by that class of persons most addicted to this crime, is exceedingly disgraceful; for there can be little doubt that the palliating views of this practice taken by some ethical writers of celebrity, together with the loose reasonings of men of the world, have, from this neglect, exercised much

influence upon many minds; and the consequence has been that hundreds, in this professedly Christian country, have fallen victims to false notions of honor, and to imperfect notions of the obligations of their religion. Paley has the credit of dealing with this vice with greater decision than many of our moralists. He classes it very justly with murder.

"Murder is forbidden; and wherever human life is deliberately taken away, otherwise than by public

authority, there is murder." (Moral and Political Philosophy.) "If unauthorized laws of honor be allowed to create exceptions to Divine prohibitions, there is an end to all morality, as founded in the will of the Deity; and the obligation of every duty may, at one time or other, be discharged by the caprice and fluctuations of fashion." (Moral and Political Philosophy.) The fact is, that we must either renounce Christianity, or try all cases by its rule. The question of the lawfulness

of dueling is thus promptly disposed of. If I have received a personal injury, I am bound to forgive it, unless it be of such a nature that it becomes a duty to punish it by due course of law; but even then not in the spirit of revenge, but out of respect to the peace and welfare of society. If I have given offence, I am bound to acknowledge it, and to make reparation; and if my adversary will not be satisfied, and insists upon my staking my life against his own, no considerations of reputation or disgrace,

the good or ill opinion of men, who form their judgments in utter disregard to the laws of God, can have any more weight in this, than in any other case of immorality. The sin of dueling unites, in fact, the two crimes of suicide and of murder. He who falls in a duel is guilty of suicide, by voluntarily exposing himself to be slain; he by whom he falls is guilty of murder, as having shed man's blood without authority. Nay, the guilt of the two crimes unites in the same person. He who falls is a suicide in

fact, and the murderer of another in intention; he by whom he falls is a murderer in fact, and so far a suicide as to have put his own life into imminent peril, in contempt of God's authority over him. He has contemned the "image of God in man," both in himself and in his brother. And where duels are not fatal on either side, the whole guilt is chargeable upon the parties, as a sin purposed in the heart, although, in that case, there is space left for repentance.

Life, then, is not disposable at the option of man, nor is property itself, without respect to the rules of the Divine law; and here, too, we shall perceive the feebleness of the considerations urged, in merely moral systems, to restrain prodigal and wasteful expenditure, hazardous speculations, and even the obvious evil of gambling. Many weighty arguments, we grant, may be drawn against all these from the claims of children, and near relations, whose interests we are bound to regard, and whom we can

have no right to expose even to the chance of being involved in the same ruin with ourselves. But these reasons can have little sway with those who fancy that they can keep within the verge of extreme danger, and who will plead their "natural right" to do what they will with their own. In cases, too, where there may be no children or dependent relatives, the individual would feel less disposed to acknowledge the force of this class of reasons, or think them quite inapplicable to his case. But Christianity

enjoins "moderation" of the desires, and temperance in the gratification of the appetites, and in the show and splendor of life, even where a state of opulence can command them. It has its admonitions against the "love of money;" against "willing to be rich," except as "the Lord may prosper a man" in the usual track and course of honest industry, - authoritative cautions which lie directly against hazardous speculations; and it warns such as despise them of the consequent "temptations" and spiritual

"snares," destructive to habits of piety, and ultimately to the soul, into which they must fall, -

considerations of vast moment, but peculiar to itself, and quite out of the range of those moral systems which have no respect to its authority. Against gambling, in its most innocent forms, it sets its injunction, "Redeeming the time;" and in its more aggravated cases, it opposes to it not only the above considerations, as it springs from an

unhallowed "love of money;"but the whole of that spirit and temper which it makes to be obligatory upon us, and which those evil and often diabolical excitements, produced by this habit, so fearfully violate. Above all, it makes property a trust, to be employed under the rules prescribed by Him who, as sovereign proprietor, has deposited it with us, which rules require its use certainly; (for the covetous are excluded from the kingdom of God;) but its use, first, for the supply of our wants,

according to our station, with moderation; then, as a provision for children, and dependent relatives; finally, for purposes of charity and religion, in which "grace," as before stated, it requires us "to abound;" - and it enforces all these by placing us under the responsibility of accounting to God himself, in person, for the abuse or neglect of this trust, at the general judgment.

With respect to the third natural right, that of liberty, it is a question which can seldom or never

occur in the present state of society, whether a man is free to part with it for a valuable consideration. Under the law of Moses, this was certainly allowed; but a Christian man stands on different ground. To a pagan he would not be at liberty to enslave himself, because he is not at liberty to put to hazard his soul's interests, which might be interfered with by the control given to a pagan over his time and conduct. To a Christian he could not be at liberty to alienate himself, because, the spirit of Christianity being

opposed to slavery, the one is not at liberty to buy, nor the other to sell, for reasons before given. I conclude, therefore, that no man can lawfully divest himself absolutely of his personal liberty, for any consideration whatever.

To the natural rights of life, property and liberty, may be added the right of conscience.

By this is meant the right which a man has to profess his own opinions on subjects of religion, and to worship God in the mode which he deems most

acceptable to him. Whether this, however, be strictly a natural right, like the three above mentioned, may be a subject of dispute, for then it would be universal, which is, perhaps, carrying the point too far. The matter may best be determined by considering the ground of that right, which differs much from the others we have mentioned. The right to life results both from the appointment of God, and the absence of a superior or countervailing right in another to deprive us of it, until, at least, we forfeit

that right to some third party, by some voluntary act of our own. This also applies to the rights of property and liberty. The right of professing particular religious opinions, and practicing a particular mode of worship, can only rest upon a conviction that these are duties enjoined upon us by God.

For since religion is a matter which concerns man and God, a man must know that it is obligatory upon him as a duty, and under fear of God's

displeasure, to profess his opinions openly, and to practice some particular mode of worship.

To apply this to the case of persons all sincerely receiving the Bible as a revelation from God.

Unquestionably it is a part of that revelation, that those who receive its doctrines should profess and attempt to propagate them; nor can they profess them in any other way than they interpret the meaning of the book which contains them. Equally clear is it, that the worship of God is

enjoined upon man and that publicly, and in collective bodies. From these circumstances, therefore, it results, that it is a duty which man owes to God to profess and to endeavor to propagate his honest views of the meaning of the Scriptures, and to worship God in the mode which he sincerely conceives is made obligatory upon him, by the same sacred volume. It is from this duly that the right of conscience flows, and from this alone; and it thus becomes a right of that nature which no

earthly power has any authority to obstruct, because it can have no power to alter or to destroy the obligations which almighty God, the supreme governor, has laid upon his creatures.

It does not, however, follow from this statement, that human governments, professing to be regulated themselves by the principles of Christianity, have no authority to take cognizance of the manner in which this right of conscience is exercised. They are "ordained of God"

to uphold their subjects in the exercise of their just rights respectively, and that without partiality. If, therefore, under a plea of conscience, one sect should interfere to obstruct others in a peaceable profession of their opinions, and a peaceable exercise of their worship; or should exercise its own so as to be vexatiously intrusive upon others, and in defiance of some rival sect; as for instance, in a Protestant country, if Roman Catholics were to carry the objects of their idolatry about the streets, instead of

contenting themselves with worshipping in their own way, in their own chapels. In all such cases the government might be bound in respect of the rights of other classes of its subjects, to interfere by restraint, nor would it then trespass upon the rights of conscience, justly interpreted. Again, since "the powers that be are ordained of God," for "a terror to evil doers, and a praise to them that do well;" which evil doing and well doing are to be interpreted according to the common sense and

agreement of mankind, and plainly refer to moral actions only; should any sect or individual, ignorantly, fanatically, or corruptly, so interpret the Scriptures as to suppose themselves free from moral obligation, and then proceed to practice their tenets by any such acts as violate the laws of well-ordered society, or by admitting indecencies into their modes of worship, as some fanatics in former times who used to strip themselves naked in their assemblies; here too a government would have

the right to disregard the plea of conscience if set up, and to restrain such acts, and the teachers of them, as pernicious to society. But if the opinions professed by any sect, however erroneous they may be, and however zealously a sound and faithful Christian might be called by a sense of duty to denounce them as involving a corrupt conscience, or no conscience at all, and as dangerous or fatal to the salvation of those that hold them, do not interfere with the peace, the morals, and

good order of society; it is not within the province of a government to animadvert upon them by force of law; since it was not established to judge of men's sincerity in religion, nor of the tendency of opinions as they affect their salvation, but only to uphold the morals and good order of the community. So, likewise, what has been called by some worship, has been sometimes marked with great excesses of enthusiasm, and with even ridiculous follies; but if the peace of others, and the morals of society, - are

not thereby endangered, it is not the part of the magistracy to interfere, at least by authority.

In cases, however, where political opinions are connected with religious notions, and the plea of conscience is set up as an "unalienable right," to sanction their propagation, a government may be justified in interposing, not indeed on the ground that it judges the conscience to be erring and corrupt, but for its own just support when endangered by such opinions. Sects of religious

republicans have sometimes appeared under a monarchical government, - the Fifth Monarchy Fanatics, for instance, who, according to their interpretation of the kingdom of Christ, regarded the existence of all earthly monarchies as inimical to it, and believing that the period of its establishment was come, thought it impiety to acknowledge any earthly sovereign, as being contrary to their allegiance to Christ. When such notions are confined to a few persons it is wise in a

government to leave them to their own absurdities as their most potent cure; but should a fanaticism of this kind seize upon a multitude, and render them restless and seditious, the state would be justifiable in restraining them by force, although a mistaken conscience might be mixed up with the error. We may therefore conclude, that as to religious sects, the plea of conscience does not take their conduct out of the cognizance of the civil magistrate when the peace, the morality, and safety of

society are infringed upon; but that otherwise, the rights of conscience are inviolable, even when it is obviously erroneous, and, religiously considered, as to the individual, dangerous. The case then is one which is to be dealt with by instruction, and moral suasion. It belongs to public instructors, and to all well-informed persons, to correct an ignorant and perverse conscience, by friendly and compassionate admonition; and the power of the magistrate is only lawfully interposed, when

the effect complained of so falls upon society as to infringe upon the rights of others, or upon the public morals and peace; but even then the facts ought to be obvious, and not constructive.

The case of those who reject the revelation of the Scriptures must be considered on its own merits.

Simple Deism, in a Christian country, may lay a foundation for such a plea of conscience as the state ought to admit, although it should be

rejected by a sound theologian. The Deist derives his religion by inference from what he supposes discoverable of the attributes and will of God from nature, and the course of the Divine government. Should he conclude that among such indications of the will of God there are those which make it his duty to profess his opinions, to attack the evidences of our Divine revelation as of insufficient proof, and to worship God in a manner more agreeable to his system, it would be too delicate an

interference of a government with a question of conscience, to be allowed to make itself the judge whether any such conviction could be conscientiously entertained; although by divines, in their character of public instructors, this would properly be denied. Absolutely to shut out, by penal laws, all discussion on the evidences of Divine revelation, would probably make secret infidels in such numbers as would more than counterbalance the advantage which would be gained, and that by the

suspicion which it would excite. But this principle would not extend to the protection of any doctrine directly subversive of justice, chastity, or humanity; for then society would be attacked, and the natural as well as civil rights of man invaded. Nor can opprobrious and blasphemous attacks upon Christianity be covered by a plea of conscience and right, since these are not necessary to argument. It is evident that conscience, in the most liberal construction of the term, cannot be pleaded in their

behalf; and they are not innocent even as to society.

To those systems which deny the immortality of the soul, and consequently, a state of future retribution, and which assume any of the forms of Atheism, no toleration can, consistently with duty, be extended by a Christian government. The reasons of this exception are, 1. That the very basis of its jurisprudence, which is founded upon a belief in God, the sanctity of oaths, and a future state, is assaulted by such doctrines, and that it

cannot co-exist with them:2. That they are subversive of the morals of the people: and, 3. That no conscience can be pleaded by their votaries for the avowal of such tenets. When the existence of a God and his moral government are denied, no conscience can exist to require the publication of such tenets; for this cannot be a duty imposed upon them by God, since they deny his existence. No right of conscience is therefore violated when they are restrained by civil penalties. Such persons

cannot have the advantages of society, without submitting to the principles on which it is founded; and as they profess to believe that they are not accountable beings, their silence cannot be a guilt to them; they give up the argument drawn from conscience, and from its rights, which have no existence at all but as founded upon revealed duty.

The second branch of justice we have denominated ECONOMICAL: it respects

those relations which grow out of the existence of men in families.

The first is that of husband and wife, and arises out of the institution of marriage.

The foundation of the marriage union is the will of God that the human race should "increase and multiply," but only through a chaste and restricted conjunction of one man and one woman, united by their free vows in a bond made by the Divine law indissoluble, except by death or by adultery. The will of God as to marriage

is, however, general, and is not so expressed as to lay an imperative obligation to marry upon every one, in all circumstances. There was no need of the law being directed to each individual as such, since the instincts of nature, and the affection of love planted in human beings, were sufficient to guarantee its general observance. The very bond of marriage too being the preference founded upon love, rendered the act one in which choice and feeling were to have great influence; nor could a

prudent regard to circumstances be excluded. Cases were possible in which such a preference as is essential to the felicity and advantages of that state might not be excited, nor the due degree of affection to warrant the union called forth. There might be cases in which circumstances might be inimical to the full discharge of some of the duties of that state; as the comfortable maintenance of a wife, and a proper provision for children. Some individuals would also be called by

Providence to duties in the Church and in the world, which might better be performed in a single and unfettered life; and seasons of persecution, as we are taught by St. Paul, have rendered it an act of Christian prudence to abstain even from this honorable estate. The general rule, however, is in favor of marriage; and all exceptions seem to require justification on some principle grounded upon an equal or a paramount obligation.

One intention of marriage in its original institution was the production of the greatest number of healthy children; and that it secures this object is proved from the universal fact, that population increases more and is of better quality, where marriage is established, and its sacred laws are observed, than where the intercourse of the sexes is promiscuous. A second end was the establishment of the interesting and influential relations of acknowledged children and parents, from which the

most endearing, meliorating, and pure affections result, and which could not exist without marriage. It is indeed scarcely possible even to sketch the numerous and important effects of this sacred institution, which at once displays in the most affecting manner, the Divine benevolence and the Divine wisdom. It secures the preservation and tender nurture of children, by concentrating an affection upon them, which is dissipated and lost wherever fornication prevails. It creates conjugal

tenderness, filial piety, the attachment of brothers and sisters, and of collateral relations. It softens the feelings, and increases the benevolence of society at large, by bringing all these affections to operate powerfully within each of those domestic and family circles of which society is composed. It excites industry and economy; and secures the communication of moral knowledge, and the inculcation of civility, and early habits of submission to authority, by which men are fitted to become the subjects of a

public government, and without which, perhaps, no government could be sustained but by brute force, or, it may be, not sustained at all. These are some of the innumerable benefits by which marriage promotes human happiness, and the peace and strength of the community at large.

The institution of marriage not only excludes the promiscuous intercourse of the sexes, but polygamy also; a practice almost equally fatal to the kind affections, to education, to

morals, and to purity. The argument of our Lord with the Pharisees, on the subject of divorce, Matt. 29, assumes it as even acknowledged by the Jews, that marriage was not only of Divine institution, but that it consisted in the union of two only, - "they twain shall be one flesh." This was the law of marriage given at first, not to Adam and Eve only, but prospectively to all their descendants.

The first instance of polygamy was that of Lamech, and this has no

sanction from the Scripture; which may be observed of other instances in the Old Testament. They were opposed to the original law, and in all cases appear to have been punished with many afflictive visitations. The Mosaic law, although polygamy appears to have been practiced under it, gives no direct countenance to the practice; which intimates that, as in the case of divorce, the connivance was not intended to displace the original institution. Hence, in the

language of the Old Testament, as well as of the New, the terms husband and wife in the singular number continually occur; and a passage in the Prophet Malachi is so remarkable as to warrant the conclusion, that among the pious Jews, the original law was never wholly out of sight. "Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the Lord hath been witness between thee, and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously, yet she is thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant. And did not

he make one?" - (one woman) - "Yet had he the residue of the spirit?" - (and therefore could have made more than one) - "And wherefore one?" "That he might seek a godly seed," is the answer, which strongly shows how closely connected in the prophet's mind were the circumstances of piety in the offspring and the restraint of marriage to one wife only; for he thus glances at one of the obvious evils of polygamy, its deteriorating moral influence upon children. If, however, in some instances

the practice of the Jews fell short of the strictness of the original law of marriage, that law is now fully restored by Christ. In a discourse with the Pharisees, he not only re-enacts that law, but guards against its evasion by the practice of divorce; and asserts the marriage union to be indissoluble by any thing but adultery. The argument of our Lord in this discourse is, indeed, equally conclusive against polygamy and against the practice of divorce; for "if," says Dr. Paley,

"whoever putteth away his wife and marrieth another committeth adultery, he who marrieth another, the first wife being living, is no less guilty of adultery; because the adultery does not consist in the repudiation of the first wife; for, however cruel and unjust that may be, it is not adultery; but in entering into a second marriage, during the legal existence and obligation of the first."

Nature itself comes in also as a confirmation of this original law. - in births,

there is a small surplusage of males over females; which, being reduced by the more precarious life of males, and by the accidents to which more than females they are exposed from wars and dangerous employments, brings the number of males and females to a par, and shows that in the order of Providence a man ought to have but one wife; and that where polygamy is not allowed, every woman may have a husband. This equality, too, is found in all countries; although some licentious writers have

attempted to deny it upon unsound evidence.

Another end of marriage was, the prevention of fornication; and as this is done, not only by providing for a lawful gratification of the sexual appetite; but more especially by that mutual affection upon which marriages, when contracted according to the will of God, are founded, this conjunction necessarily requires that degree of love between the contracting parties which produces a preference of each other above every

man or woman in the world. Wherever this degree of affection does not exist, it may therefore be concluded that the rite of marriage is profaned, and the greatest security for the accomplishment of its moral ends weakened or destroyed. Interest, compliance with the views of family connections, caprice, or corporal attractions, it may be therefore concluded, are not in themselves lawful grounds of marriage, as tending, without affection, to frustrate the intention of God in its institution; to

which end all are bound to subject themselves. On the other hand, since love is often a delusive and sickly affection, exceedingly temporary and uncertain, when it is unconnected with judgment and prudence; and also because marriages are for the most part contracted by the young and inexperienced, whose passions are then strongest when their judgments are most immature; in no step in life is the counsel of others more necessary, and in no case ought it to be sought with greater docility than

in this. A proper respect to the circumstances of age, fitness, &c, ought never to be superseded by the plea of mere affection; although no circumstances can justify marriage without that degree of affection which produces an absolute preference.

Whether marriage be a civil or a religious contract has been a subject of dispute. The truth seems to be that it is both. It has its engagements to men, and its vows to God. A Christian state recognizes marriage as a branch of

public morality, and a source of civil peace and strength. It is connected with the peace of society by assigning one woman to one man, and the state protects him, therefore, in her exclusive possession. Christianity, by allowing divorce in the event of adultery, supposes, also, that the crime must be proved by proper evidence before the civil magistrate; and lest divorce should be the result of unfounded suspicion, or be made a cover for license, the decision of the case could safely be lodged nowhere

else. Marriage, too, as placing one human being more completely under the powder of another than any other relation, requires laws for the protection of those who are thus so exposed to injury. The distribution of society into families, also, can only be an instrument for promoting the order of the community, by the cognizance which the law takes of the head of a family and by making him responsible, to a certain extent, for the conduct of those under his influence. Questions of property are

also involved in marriage and its issue. The law must, therefore, for these and many other weighty reasons, be cognizant of marriage; must prescribe various regulations respecting it; require publicity of the contract; and guard some of the great injunctions of religion in the matter by penalties. In no well-ordered state can marriage, therefore, be so exclusively left to religion as to shut out the cognizance and control of the state. But then those who would have the whole matter to lie

between the parties themselves, and the civil magistrate, appear wholly to forget that marriage is a solemn religious act, in which vows are made to God by both persons, who, when the rite is properly understood, engage to abide by all those laws with which he has guarded the institution; to love and cherish each other; and to remain faithful to each other until death. For if, at least, they profess belief in Christianity, whatever duties are laid upon husbands and wives in Holy Scripture, they engage

to obey, by the very act of their contracting marriage. The question, then, is whether such vows to God as are necessarily involved in marriage, are to be left between the parties and God privately, or whether they ought to be publicly made before his ministers and the Church. On this the Scriptures are silent; but though Michaelis has showed, (Commentaries on the Laws of Moses,) that the priests under the law were not appointed to celebrate marriage; yet in the practice of the modern Jews, it is a religious

ceremony, the chief rabbi of the synagogue being present, and prayers being appointed for the occasion. (Alien's Modern Judaism.) This renders it probable that the character of the ceremony under the law, from the most ancient times, was a religious one. The more direct connection of marriage with religion in Christian states, by assigning its celebration to the ministers of religion, appears to be a very beneficial custom, and one which the state has a right to enjoin. For since the welfare and morals of

society are so much interested in the performance of the mutual duties of the married state; and since those duties have a religious as well as civil character, it is most proper that some provision should be made for explaining those duties; and for this a standing form of marriage is best adapted. By acts of religion, also, they are more solemnly impressed upon the parties. -

When this is prescribed in any state, it becomes a Christian cheerfully, and even thankfully, to comply

with a custom of so important a tendency, as matter of conscientious subjection to lawful authority, although no Scriptural precept can be pleaded for it. That the ceremony should be confined to the clergy of an established Church is a different consideration. We are inclined to think that the religious effect would be greater, were the ministers o f each religious body to be authorized by the state to celebrate marriages among their own people, due provision being made for the regular and

secure registry of them, and to prevent the civil laws respecting marriage from being evaded.

When this important, contract is once made, then certain rights are acquired by the parties mutually, who are also bound by reciprocal duties, in the fulfillment of which the practical

"righteousness" of each consists. Here, also, the superior character of the morals of the New Testament, as well as their higher authority, is illustrated. It may, indeed,

be within the scope of mere moralists to show that fidelity, and affection, and all the courtesies necessary to maintain affection, are rationally obligatory upon those who are connected by the nuptial bond: but in Christianity that fidelity is guarded by the express law, "Thou shalt not commit adultery;" and by our Lord's exposition of the spirit of that law, which forbids the indulgence of loose thoughts and desires, and places the purity of the heart under the guardianship of that hallowed fear which his

authority tends to inspire. Affection, too, is made a matter of diligent cultivation upon considerations, and by a standard, peculiar to our religion. Husbands are placed in a relation to their wives, similar to that which Christ bears to his Church, and his example is thus made their rule; as Christ "gave himself," his life, "for the Church," Eph.5:25, so are they to hazard life for their wives. As Christ saves his Church, so is it the bounden duty of husbands to endeavor, by every possible means, to promote

the religious edification and salvation of their wives. The connection is thus exalted into a religious one; and when love which knows no abatement, protection at the hazard of life, and a tender and constant solicitude for the salvation of a wife are thus enjoined, the greatest possible security is established for the exercise of kindness and fidelity. The oneness of this union is also more forcibly stated in Scripture than any where beside: "They twain shall be one flesh." "So ought men to love their

wives as their own bodies; he that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church." Precept and illustration can go no higher than this; and nothing evidently is wanting either of direction or authority to raise the state of marriage into the highest, most endearing, and sanctified relation in which two human beings can stand to each other. The duties of wives are reciprocal to those of husbands. The outline in

the note below (2) comprises both: it presents a series of obligations which are obviously drawn from the New Testament; but which nothing except that could furnish. The extract is made from an old writer, and although expressed in homely phrase will be admired for discrimination and comprehensiveness.

(2) PARTICULAR DUTIES OF WIVES.

Subjection, the general head of all wives duties.

Acknowledgment of an husbands superiority.

A due esteeme of her owne husband as the best for her, and worthy of honour on her part.

An inward wife-like fear.

An outward reverend carriage toward her husband, which consisteth in a wife-like sobrietie, mildnesse, curtissie, and modestie in apparel.

Reverend speech to and of her husband. Obedience.

Forbearing to do without, or against her husbands

consent, such things as he hath power to order, as, to dispose and order the common goods of the families, and the allowance for it, or children, servants, chattel, guests, journeys, &c.

A ready yielding to what her husband would have done. This is manifested by a willingness to dwell where he will, to come when he calls, and to do what he requires.

A patient bearing of any reproof, and a ready redressing of that for which she is justly reproved.

Contentment with her husbands present estate.

Such a subjection as may stand with her subjection to Christ.

Such a subjection as the Church yield-eth to Christ, which is sincere, pure, cheerful, constant, for conscience sake.

PARTICULAR DUTIES OF HUSBANDS.

Wisdom and love, the general heads of all husbands duties.

Acknowledgment of a wives near conjunction and

fellowship with her husband.

A good esteeme of his owne wife as the best for him, and worthy of love on his part.

An inward intire affection.

An outward amiable carriage toward his wife, which consisteth in an husband-like gravity, mildness, courteous acceptance of her curtissie, and allowing her to wear fit apparel.

Mild and loving speech to and of his wife.

A wise maintaining his authority, and forbearing to exact all that is in his power.

A ready yielding to his wives request, and giving a general consent and liberty unto her to order the affaires of the house, children, servants, &c. And a free allowing her something to bestow as she seeth occasion.

A forbearing to exact more than his wife is willing to do, or to force her to dwell where it is not meet, or to enjoin her to do things that

are unmeet in themselves, or against her mind.

A wise ordering of reproof, not using it without just and weighty cause, and then privately and meekly.

A provident care for his wife, according to his abilities.

A forbearing to exact any thing which stands not with a good conscience.

Such a love as Christ beareth to the Church, and man to himself, which is first free, in deed and truth, pure, chaste, constant.

ABERRATIONS OF WIVES FROM THEIR PARTICULAR DUTIES.

Ambition, the general! ground of the aberrations of wives.

A conceit that wives are their husbands equals.

A conceit that she could better subject herself to any other man than to her own husband.

An inward despising of her husband.

Unreverend behavior toward her husband, manifested by lightness,

sullenness, scornfulness, and vanity in her attire.

Irreverent speech to and of her husband.

A stout standing on her owne will.

A peremptory undertaking to do things as she list, without and against her husbands consent.

This is manifested by privy purloining his goods, taking allowance, ordering children, servants, and chattel, feasting strangers, making journeys and vows, as herself listeth.

An obstinate standing upon her own will, making her husband dwell where she will, and refusing to go when he calls, or to do any thing upon his command.

Disdain at reproof: giving word for word: and waxing worse for being reproved.

Discontent at her husbands estate.

Such a pleasing of her husband as offendeth Christ.

Such a subjection as is most unlike to the Church's, viz. fained, forced, fickle, &c.

ABERRATIONS OF HUSBANDS FROM THEIR PARTICULAR DUTIES.

Want of wisdom and love, the general grounds of the aberrations of husbands.

Too mean account of wives.

A preposterous conceit of his owne wife to be the worst of all, and that he could love any but her.

A stoical disposition, without all heat of affection.

An unbecoming carriage toward his wife, manifested by his baseness, tyrannical

usage of her loftiness, rashness, and niggardliness.

Harsh, proud, and bitter speeches to and of his wife.

Losing of his authority.

Too much strictness over his wife. - This is manifested by restraining her from doing any thing without particular and expressed consent, taking too strict account of her, and allowing her no more than is needful for her owne private use.

Too lordly a standing upon the highest step of his

authority: being too frequent insolent, and peremptory in commanding things frivolous, unmeet, and against his wife's mind and conscience.

Rashness and bitterness in reproving: and that too frequently on slight occasions, and disgracefully before children, servants, and strangers.

A careless neglect of his wife, and niggardly dealing with her, and that in her weaknesse.

A commanding of unlawful things.

Such a disposition as is most unlike to Christ's, and to that which a man beareth to himself, viz.

compliment, impure, for by respects, inconstant, &c.

the duties of children is a branch of Christian morality which receives both illustration and authority in a very remarkable and peculiar manner from the Scriptures. "Honor thy father and thy mother," is a precept which occupies a

place in those tables of law which were written at first by the finger of God; and is, as the Apostle Paul notes, "the first commandment with promise."

The meaning of the term honor is comprehensive, and imports, as appears from various passages in which it occurs, reverence, affection, and grateful obedience. It expresses at once a principle and a feeling, each of which must influence the practice; one binding obedience upon the conscience, the other rendering it the free

effusion of the heart; one securing the great points of duty, and the other giving rise to a thousand tender sentiments and courtesies which mutually meliorate the temper, and open one of the richest sources of domestic felicity.

The honoring of parents is likewise enforced in Scripture, by a temporal promise. This is not peculiar to the law; for when the apostle refers to this "as the first commandment with promise,"

and adds, "that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest live long on the earth," Eph. 6:3, 4, he clearly intimates that this promise is carried forward into the Christian dispensation; and though it is undoubtedly modified by the circumstances of an economy which is not so much founded upon temporal promises as the law, it retains its full force as a general declaration of special favor on the part of God. This duty also derives a most influential and affecting illustration from the conduct of our Lord,

who was himself an instance of subjection to parents; of the kindest behavior to them; and who, amidst his agonies on the cross, commended his weeping mother to the special regard of the beloved disciple, John, charging him with her care and support as a "son," in his own stead. In no system of mere ethics, certainly, is this great duty, on which so much of human interest and felicity depends, and which exerts so much influence upon society, thus illustrated, and thus enforced.

The duties of children may be thus sketched.

love, which is founded upon esteem and reverence, comprises gratitude also; no small degree of which is obligatory upon every child for the unwearied cares, labors, and kindness of parental affection. In the few unhappy instances in which esteem for a parent can have little place, gratitude, at least, ought to remain; nor can any case arise in which the obligation of filial love can be cancelled.

Reverence, which consists in that honorable esteem of parents which children ought to cherish in their hearts, and from which springs on the one hand the desire to please, and on the other the fear to offend. The fear of a child is, however, opposed to the fear of a slave; the latter has respect chiefly to the punishment which may be inflicted; but the other being mixed with love, and the desire to be loved, has respect to the offence which may be taken by a parent, his grief, and his displeasure. Hence the fear

of God, as a grace of the Spirit in the regenerate, is compared to the fear of children. This reverential regard due to parents has its external expression in all honor and civility, whether in words or actions. The behavior is to be submissive, the speech respectful, reproof is to be borne by them with meekness, and the impatience of parents sustained in silence. Children are bound to close their eyes as much as possible upon the failings and infirmities of the authors of their being, and

always to speak of them honorably among themselves, and in the presence of others. "The hearts of all men go along with Noah in laying punishment upon Ham for his unnatural and profane derision, and love the memory of those sons that would not see themselves, nor suffer others to be the witnesses of the miscarriages of their father." In the duty of "honoring" parents, is also included their support when in necessity. This appears from our Lord's application of this

commandment of the law in his reproof of the Pharisees, who, if they had made a vow of their property, thought it then lawful to withhold assistance from their parents, Matt. 15:4-6.

To affection and reverence, is to be added, obedience, which is universal: "Children, obey your parents in all things;" with only one restriction, which respects the consciences of children, when at age to judge for themselves. The apostle therefore adds, "in the Lord." That this limits

the obedience of children to the lawful commands of parents, is clear also from our Lord's words, "If any love father or mother more than me he is not worthy of me." God is to be loved and obeyed above all. In all lawful things the rule is absolute; and the obedience, like that we owe to God, ought to be cheerful and unwearied. Should it chance to cross our inclinations, this will be no excuse for hesitancy, much less for refusal.

One of the principal cases in which this principle is

often most severely tried, is that of marriage.

The general rule clearly is, that neither son nor daughter ought to marry against the command of a father, with whom the prime authority of the family is lodged; nor even without the consent of the mother, should the father be willing, if she can find any weighty reason for her objection; for, although the authority of the mother is subordinate and secondary, yet is she entitled to obedience from the child. There is, however, a

considerable difference between marrying at the command of a parent, and marrying against his prohibition. In the first case, children are more at liberty than in the other; yet even here, the wishes of parents in this respect are to be taken into most serious consideration, with a preponderating desire to yield to them: but if a child feels that his affections still refuse to run in the course of the parents' wishes; if he is conscious that he cannot love his intended wife "as himself," as "his own flesh;" he is prohibited by a

higher rule, which presents an insuperable barrier to his compliance. In this case the child is at liberty to refuse, if it is done deliberately, and expressed with modesty and proper regret at not being able to comply, for the reasons stated; and every parent ought to dispense freely with the claim of obedience. But to marry in opposition to a parent's express prohibition, is a very grave case. The general rule lies directly against this act of disobedience, as against all others, and the violation of

it is therefore sin. And what blessing can be expected to follow such marriages? or rather, what curse may not be feared to follow them? The law of God is transgressed, and the image of his authority in parents is despised. Those exceptions to this rule which can be justified, are very few.

In no case but where the parties have attained the full legal age of twenty-one years, ought an exception to be even considered; but it may perhaps be allowed, 1. When the sole objection

of the parent is the marriage of his child with a person fearing God. 2. When the sole reason given is, a wish to keep a child unmarried from caprice, interest, or other motive, which no parent has a right to require, when the child is of legal age. 3. When the objections are simply those of prejudice, without reasonable ground; but in this case, the child ought not to assume to be the sole judge of the parent's reasons; and would not be at liberty to act, unless supported by the opinion of impartial and judicious

friends, whose advice and mediation ought to be asked, in order that, in so delicate an affair, he or she may proceed with a clear conscience.

The persuading a daughter to elope from her parents' house, where the motive is no other than the willful following of personal affection, which spurns at parental control and authority, must, therefore, be considered as a great crime. It induces the daughter to commit a very criminal act of disobedience; and, on the

part of the man, it is a worse kind of felony than stealing the property of another. "For children are much more properly a man's own than his goods, and the more highly to be esteemed, by how much reasonable creatures are to be preferred before senseless things." (Gouge on Relative Duties.)

the duties of parents are exhibited with equal clearness in the Scriptures, and contain a body of most important practical instructions.

The first duty is love, which, although a natural instinct, is yet to be cultivated and nourished by Christians under a sense of duty, and by frequent meditation upon all those important and interesting relations in which religion has placed them and their offspring. The duty of sustentation and care, therefore, under the most trying circumstances, is imperative upon parents; for, though this is not directly enjoined, it is supposed necessarily to follow from that parental love which the Scriptures

inculcate; and also, because the denial of either to infants would destroy them, and thus the unnatural parent would be involved in the crime of murder.

To this follows instruction, care for the mind succeeding the nourishment and care of the body.

This relates to the providing such an education for children as is suited to their condition, and by which they may be fitted to gain a reputable livelihood when they are of

age to apply themselves to business. But it specially relates to their instruction in the doctrines of Holy Writ. This is clearly what the Apostle Paul means, Eph. 6:4, by directing parents to "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." A parent is considered in Scripture as a priest in his own family, which is a view of this relation not to be found in ethical writers, or deducible from any principles from which they would infer parental duties, independently of revelation; and from this it

derives a most exalted character. The offices of sacrifice, inter-cession, and religious instruction, were all performed by the patriarchs; and, as we have already seen, although, under the law, the offering of sacrifices was restrained to the appointed priesthood, yet was it still the duty of the head of the family to bring his sacrifices for immolation in the prescribed manner; and so far was the institution of public teachers from being designed to supersede the father's office, that the

heads of the Jewish families were specially enjoined to teach the law to their children diligently, and daily, Deut. 6:7. Under the same view does Christianity regard the heads of its families, as priests in their houses, offering spiritual gifts and sacrifices, and as the religious instructors of their children. Hence it is, in the passage above quoted, that "fathers" are commanded, "to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord;" or, in other words, in the knowledge of

the doctrines, duties, motives, and hopes of the Christian religion.

This is a work, therefore, which belongs to the very office of a father as the priest of his household, and cannot be neglected by him, but at his own, and his children's peril. Nor is it to be occasionally and cursorily performed, but so that the object may be attained, namely, that they may "know the Scriptures from their childhood," and have stored their minds with their laws, and doctrines, and promises, as

their guide in future life; a work which will require, at least, as much attention from the Christian as from the Jewish parent, who was commanded on this wise,

- "Thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children, and thou shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."

The practice of the Jews in this respect, appears to have been adopted by the Christians of the primitive Churches, which were

composed of both Jewish and Gentile converts in almost every place; and from them it is probable that the early customs of teaching children to commit portions of Scripture to memory, to repeat prayers night and morning, and to approach their parents for their blessing, might be derived. The last pleasing and impressive form, which contains a recognition of the domestic priesthood, as inherent in the head of any family, has in this country grown of late into disuse,

which is much to be regretted.

It is also essential to the proper discharge of the parental duty of instructing children, that every means should be used to render what is taught influential upon the heart and conduct. It is, therefore, solemnly imperative upon parents to be "holy in all manner of conversation, and godliness," and thus to enforce truth by example. It concerns them, as much as ministers, to be anxious for the success of their labors; and recognizing the

same principle, that "God giveth the in crease," to be abundant in prayers for the gift of the Holy Spirit to their children. Both as a means of grace, and in recognition of God's covenant of mercy with them and their seed after them, it behooves them also to bring their children to baptism in their infancy; to explain to them the baptismal covenant when they are able to understand it; and to habituate them from early years to the observance of the Sabbath, and to regular attendance

on the public worship of God.

The government of children is another great branch of parental duty, in which both the parents are bound cordially to unite. Like all other kinds of government appointed by God, the end is the good of those subject to it; and it therefore excludes all caprice, vexation, and tyranny. In the case of parents, it is eminently a government of love, and therefore, although it includes strictness, it necessarily excludes

severity. The mild and benevolent character of our Divine religion displays itself here, as in every other instance where the heat of temper, the possession of power, or the ebullitions of passion, might be turned against the weak and unprotected. The civil laws of those countries in which Christianity was first promulgated, gave great power to parents (3) over their children, which, in the unfeeling spirit of paganism, was often harshly, and even cruelly, used. On the contrary, St. Paul enjoins, "And ye

fathers, provoke not your children to wrath," meaning plainly, by a rigorous severity, an overbearing and tyrannical behavior, tending to exasperate angry passions in them. So again, "Fathers, provoke not your children, lest they be discouraged," discouraged from all attempts at pleasing, as regarding it an impossible task, "and be unfitted to pass through the world with advantage, when their spirits have been unreasonably broken under an oppressive yoke, in the earliest years of their

life." (Doddrldge on Coloss. 3:21.) But though the parental government is founded upon kindness, and can never be separated from it, when rightly understood and exercised, it is still government, and is a trust committed by God to the parent, which must be faithfully discharged. Corporal correction is not only allowed, but is made a duty in Scripture, where other means would be ineffectual. Yet it may be laid down as a certain principle, that, where the authority of a parent is exercised with constancy

and discretion, and enforced by gravity, kindness, and character, this will seldom be found necessary; nor, when the steady resolution of the parent to inflict it when it is demanded by the case, is once known to the child, will it need often to be repeated. Pa-rental government is also concerned in forming the manners of children; in inculcating civility, order, cleanliness, industry, and economy; in repressing extravagant desires and gratifications in dress and amusements; and in

habituating the will to a ready submission to authority. It must be so supreme, whatever the age of children may be, as to control the whole order and habits of the family, and to exclude all licentiousness, riot, and unbecoming amusements from the house, lest the curse of Eli should fall upon those who imitate his example in not reproving evil with sufficient earnestness, and not restraining it by the effectual exercise of authority.

(3) By the old Roman law, the father had the power of life and death, as to his children.

Another duty of parents is the comfortable settlement of their children in the world, as far as their ability extends. This includes the discreet choosing of a calling, by which their children may "provide things honest in the sight of all men;" taking especial care, however, that their moral safety shall be consulted in the choice. - a consideration which too many disregard, under the

influence of carelessness, or a vain ambition. The "laying up for children" is also sanctioned both by nature, and by our religion; but this is not so to be understood as that the comforts of a parent, according to his rank in life, should be abridged; nor that it should interfere with those charities which Christianity has made his personal duty.

The next of these reciprocal duties, are those of servant and master.

This is a relation which will continue to the end of time.

Equality of condition is alike contrary to the nature of things, and to the appointment of God. Some must toil, and others direct; some command, and others obey; nor is this order contrary to the real interest of the multitude, as at first sight it might appear. The acquisition of wealth by a few affords more abundant employment to the many; and in a well ordered, thriving, and industrious state, except in seasons of peculiar distress, it is evident, that the comforts of the lower classes are

greater than could be attained were the land equally divided among them, and so left to their own cultivation that no one should be the servant of another. To preserve such a state of things would be impossible; and could it be done, no arts but of the rudest kind, no manufactures, and no commerce, could exist.

The very first attempt to introduce these would necessarily create the two classes of workmen and employers; of the many who labor with the hands,

and the few who labor with the mind, in directing the operations; and thus the equality would be destroyed.

It is not, however, to be denied, that through the bad principles and violent passions of man, the relations of servant and master have been a source of great evil and misery. The more, therefore, is that religion to be valued, which, since these relations must exist, restrains the evil that is incident to them, and shows how they may be made sources of

mutual benevolence and happiness. Wherever the practical influence of religion has not been felt, servants have generally been more or less treated with contempt, contumely, harshness, and oppression. They, on the contrary, are, from their natural corruption, inclined to resent authority, to indulge selfishness, and to commit fraud, either by withholding the just quantum of labor, or by direct theft. From the conflict of these evils in servants and in masters, too often result suspicion,

cunning, overreaching, malignant passions, contemptuous and irritating speeches, the loss of principle in the servant, and of kind and equitable feeling on the part of the master.

The direct manner in which the precepts of the New Testament tend to remedy these evils, cannot but be remarked. Government in masters, as well as in fathers, is an appointment of God, though differing in circumstances; and it is, therefore, to be honoured. "Let as many servants as

are under the yoke, count their own masters worthy of all honor;" a direction which enjoins both respectful thoughts, and humility and propriety of external demeanor toward them. Obedience to their commands in all things lawful is next enforced; which obedience is to be grounded on principle and conscience; on "singleness of heart, as unto Christ;" thus serving a master with the same sincerity, the same desire to do the appointed work well, as is required of us by Christ. This service is also to be

cheerful, and not wrung out merely by a sense of duty: "Not with eye service, as men pleasers;" not having respect simply to the approbation of the master, but "as the servants of Christ," making profession of his religion, "doing the will of God," in this branch of duty, "from the heart" with alacrity and good feeling. The duties of servants, stated in these brief precepts, might easily be shown to comprehend every particular which can be justly required of persons in this station; and the whole is enforced by a

sanction which could have no place but in a revelation from God, - "knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free," Eph. 6:5. In other words, even the common duties of servants, when faithfully, cheerfully, and piously performed, are by Christianity made rewardable actions: "Of the Lord ye shall receive a reward."

The duties of servants and masters are, however, strictly reciprocal. Hence

the apostle continues his injunctions as to the right discharge of these relations, by saying, immediately after he had prescribed the conduct of servants, "And ye, masters, do the same things unto them;" that is, act toward them upon the same equitable, conscientious, and benevolent principles, as you exact from them. He then grounds his rules, as to masters, upon the great and influential principle,

"Knowing that your Master is in heaven;" that you are under authority, and are

accountable to him for your conduct to your servants. Thus masters are put under the eye of God, who not only maintains their authority, when properly exercised, by making their servants accountable for any contempt of it, and for every other failure of duty, but also holds the master himself responsible for its just and mild exercise. A solemn and religious aspect is thus at once given to a relation, which by many is considered as one merely of interest. When the apostle enjoins it on masters to

"forbear threatening," he inculcates the treatment of servants with kindness of manner, with humanity, and good nature; and, by consequence also, the cultivation of that benevolent feeling toward persons in this condition, which, in all rightly influenced minds, will flow from the consideration of their equality with themselves in the sight of God; their equal share in the benefits of redemption; their relation to us as brethren in Christ, if they are "partakers of like precious faith;" and their

title to the common inheritance of heaven, where all those temporary distinctions on which human vanity is so apt to fasten, shall be done away. There will also not be wanting in such minds, a consideration of the service rendered; (for the benefit is mutual;) and a feeling of gratitude for service faithfully performed, although it is compensated by wages or hire.

To benevolent sentiment the apostle, however, adds the principles of justice and equity:

"Masters, give to your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven," who is the avenger of injustice. The terms just and equal, though terms of near affinity, have a somewhat different signification. To give that which is just to a servant, is to deal with him according to an agreement made; but to give him what is equal, is to deal fairly and honestly with him, and to return what is his due in reason and conscience, even when there are circumstances in the case

which strict law would not oblige us to take into the account. "Justice makes our contracts the measure of our dealings with others, and equity our consciences."

(Fleetwood's Relative Duties.) Equity here may also have respect particularly to that important rule which obliges us to do to others what we would, in the same circumstances, have them to do to us. This rule of equity has a large range in the treatment of servants. It ex-eludes all arbitrary

and tyrannical government; it teaches masters to respect the strength and capacity of their servants: it represses rage and passion, contumely and insult; and it directs that their labor shall not be so extended as not to leave proper time for rest, for attendance on God's worship, and, at proper seasons, for recreation.

The religious duties of masters are also of great importance.

Under the Old Testament the servants of a house

partook of the common benefit of the true religion, as appears from the case of the servants of Abraham, who were all brought into the covenant of circumcision; and from the early prohibition of idolatrous practices in families, and, consequently, the maintenance of the common worship of God. The same consecration of whole families to God we see in the New Testament; in the baptism of "houses," and the existence of domestic Churches. The practice of inculcating the

true religion upon servants, passed from the Jews to the first Christians, and followed indeed from the conscientious employment of the master's influence in favor of piety; a point to which we shall again advert.

From all this arises the duty of instructing servants in the principles of religion; of teaching them to read, and furnishing them with the Scriptures; of having them present at family worship; and of conversing with them faithfully and affectionately

respecting their best interests. In particular, it is to be observed, that servants have by the law of God a right to the Sabbath, of which no master can, without sin, deprive them. They are entitled under that law to rest on that day; and that not only for the recreation of their strength and spirits, but, especially, to enable them to attend public worship, and to read the Scriptures, and pray in private. Against this duty all those offend who employ servants in works of gain; and also those who do not so arrange the

affairs of their households, that domestic servants may be as little occupied as possible with the affairs of the house, in order that they may be able religiously to use a day which is made as much theirs as their masters', by the express letter of the law of God; nor can the blessing of God be expected to rest upon families where this shocking indifference to the religious interests of domestics, and this open disregard of the Divine command prevail. A Jewish strictness in some particulars is not bound

upon Christians; as, for example, the prohibition against lighting fires. These were parts of the municipal, not the moral law of the Jews; and they have respect to a people living in a certain climate, and in peculiar circumstances. But even these prohibitions are of use as teaching us self denial, and that in all cases we ought to keep within the rules of necessity. Unnecessary occupations are clearly forbidden even when they do not come under the description of work for gain; and when

they are avoided, there will be sufficient leisure for every part of a family to enjoy the Sabbath as a day of rest, and as a day of undistracted devotion. We may here also advert to that heavy national offence which still hangs upon us, the denying to the great majo rity of our bond slaves in the West Indies, those Sabbath rights which are secured to them by the very religion we profess. Neither as a day of rest, nor as a day of worship, is this sacred day granted to them; and for this our insolent and contemptuous

defiance of God's holy law, we must be held accountable. This is a consideration which ought to induce that part of the community who retain any fear of God to be unwearied in their applications to the legislature, until this great reproach, this weight of offence against religion and humanity, shall be taken away from us.

The employment of influence for the religious benefit of servants, forms another part of the duty of every Christian master. This appears to be

obligatory upon the general principle, that every thing which can be used by us to promote the will of God, and to benefit others, is "a talent"

committed to us, which we are required by our Lord to "occupy." It is greatly to be feared, that this duty is much neglected among professedly religious masters; that even domestic servants are suffered to live in a state of spiritual danger, without any means being regularly and affectionately used to bring them to the practical

knowledge of the truth; means which, if used with judgment and perseverance, and enforced by the natural influence of a superior, might prove in many instances both corrective and saving. But if this duty be much neglected in households, it is much more disregarded as to that class of servants who are employed as day laborers by the farmer, as journeymen by the master artisan, and as workmen by the manufacturer. More or less the master comes into immediate connection with this class of servants; and

although they are not so directly under his control as those of his household, nor within reach of the same instruction, yet is he bound to discountenance vice among them; to recommend their attendance on public worship; to see that their children are sent to schools; to provide religious help for them when sick; to prefer sober and religious men to others; and to pay them their wages in due time for market, and so early on the Saturday, or on the Friday, that their families may not

be obstructed in their preparations for attending the house of God on the Lord's day morning. If the religious character and bias of the master were thus felt by his whole establishment, and a due regard paid uniformly to justice and benevolence in the treatment of all in his employ, not only would great moral good be the result, hut there would be reason to hope that the relation between employers and their workmen, which, in consequence of frequent disputes respecting wages and combinations, has

been rendered suspicious and vexatious, would assume a character of mutual confidence and reciprocal good will.

political justice respects chiefly the relation of subject and sovereign, a delicate branch of morals in a religious system introduced into the world under such circumstances as Christianity, and which in its wisdom it has resolved into general principles of easy application, in ordinary circumstances. With equal wisdom it has left

extraordinary emergencies unprovided for by special directions; though even in such cases the path of duty is not without light reflected upon it from the whole genius and spirit of the institution.

On the origin of power, and other questions of government, endless controversies have been held, and very different theories adopted, which, so happily is the world exchanging government by force for government by public opinion, have now lost much of their interest,

and require not, therefore, a particular examination.

On this branch of morals, as on the others we have already considered, the Scriptures throw a light peculiar to themselves; and the theory of government which they contain will be found perfectly accordant with the experience of the present and best age of the world as to practical government, and exhibits a perfect harmony with that still more improved civil condition which it must ultimately assume in consequence of the

diffusion of knowledge, freedom, and virtue.

The leading doctrine of Scripture is, that government is an ordinance of God. It was manifestly his will that men should live in society; this cannot be doubted. The very laws he has given to men, prescribing their relative duties, assume the permanent existence of social relations, and therefore place them under regulation. From this fact the Divine appointment of government flows as a necessary consequence. A

society cannot exist without rules or laws; and it therefore follows that such laws must be upheld by enforcement. Hence an executive power in some form must arise, to guard, to judge, to reward, to punish. For if there were no executors of laws, the laws would become a dead letter, which would be the same thing as having none at all; and where there are no laws, there can be no society. But we are not left to inference. In the first ages of the world government was paternal, and the power of

government was vested in parents by the express appointment of God. Among the Jews, rulers, judges, kings, were also appointed by God himself; and as for all other nations, the New Testament expressly declares, that "the powers which be are ordained of God."

The origin of power is not, therefore, from man, but from God. It is not left as a matter of choice to men, whether they will submit to be governed or not; it is God's appointment that they should be subject to

those powers whom he, in his government of the world, has placed over them, in all things for which he has instituted government, that is, that it should be "a terror to evil doers, and a praise to them that do well." Nor are they at liberty "to resist the power," when employed in accomplishing such legitimate ends of government; nor to deny the right, nor to refuse the means, even when they have the power to do so, by which the supreme power may restrain evil, and enforce truth,

righteousness, and peace. Every supreme power, we may therefore conclude, is invested with full and unalienable authority to govern well; and the people of every state are bound, by the institution of God, cheerfully and thankfully to submit to be so governed.

There can, therefore, be no such compact between any parties as shall originate the right of government, or the duty of being governed; nor can any compact annul, in the least, the rightful authority of the supreme power to govern efficiently

for the full accomplishment of the ends for which government was divinely appointed; nor can it place any limit upon the duty of subjects to be governed accordingly.

We may conclude, therefore, with Paley and others, that what is called "the social compact," the theory of Locke and his followers on government, is a pure fiction. In point of fact, men never did originate government by mutual agreement; and men are all born under some government, and

become its subjects, without having any terms of compact proposed to them, or giving any consent to understood terms, or being conscious at all that their assent is necessary to convey the right to govern them, or to impose upon themselves the obligation of subjection. The absurdities which Paley has pointed out as necessarily following from the theory of the social compact, appear to be sufficiently well founded; but the fatal objection is, that it makes government a mere creation of man, whereas

Scripture makes it an ordinance of God: it supposes no obligation anterior to human consent; whereas the appointment of God constitutes the obligation, and is wholly independent of human choice and arrangement.

The matter of government, however, does not appear to be left so loose as it is represented by the author of the Moral and Political Philosophy.

The ground of the subject's obligation which he assigns is "the will of God as collected from expediency."

We prefer to assign the will of God as announced in the public law of the Scriptures; and which manifestly establishes two points as general rules:1. The positive obligation of men to submit to government:2. Their obligation to yield obedience, in all things lawful, to the governments under which they live, as appointed by God in the order of his providence, - "the powers that be," the powers which actually exist, "are ordained of God."

From these two principles it will follow, that in the case of any number of men and women being thrown together in some desert part of the world, it would be their duty to marry, to institute paternal government in their families, and to submit to a common government, in obedience to the declared will of God; and in the case of persons born under any established government, that they are required to yield submission to it as an ordinance of God, "a power" already appointed, and under which they are

placed in the order of Divine providence.

Evident, however, as these principles are, they can never be pleaded in favor of oppression and wrong; since it is always to be remembered that the same Scriptures which establish these principles have set a sufficient number of guards and limits about them, and that the rights and duties of sovereign and subject are reciprocal. The manner in which they are made to harmonize with public interest and liberty will appear after these

reciprocal duties and rights are explained.

The duties of the sovereign power, whatever its form may be, are, the enactment of just and equal laws; the impartial execution of those laws in mercy; the encouragement of religion, morality, learning, and industry; the protection and sustenance of the poor and helpless; the maintenance of domestic peace, and, as far as the interests of the community will allow, of peace with all nations; the faithful observance of all treaties;

an incessant application to the cares of government, with-put exacting more tribute from the people than is necessary for the real wants of the state, and the honorable maintenance of its officers; the appointment of inferior magistrates of probity and fitness, with a diligent and strict oversight of them; and finally, the making provision for the continued instruction of the people in the religion of the Scriptures which it professes to receive as a revelation from God, and that with such a respect to

the rights of conscience, as shall leave all men free to discharge their duties to Him who is "higher than the highest."

All these obligations are either plainly expressed, or are to be inferred from such passages as the following: "The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God; and he shall be as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds, as the tender grass springeth

out of the earth by clear shining after rain;" images which join to the attribute of justice a constant and diffusive beneficence.

"Mercy and truth preserve the king." "Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment; thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty; but in righteousness thou shalt judge." "He that saith unto the wicked, Thou art righteous," that is, acquits the guilty in judgment, "him shall the people curse, nations shall abhor him."

"Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men; such as fear God; men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, and let them judge the people at all seasons." "Him that hath a high look and a proud heart I will not suffer. Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful in the land, that they may dwell with me; he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me. He that worketh deceit shall not dwell in my house, he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight." To these and many similar

passages in the Old Testament may be added, as so many intimations of the Divine will as to rulers, those patriotic and pious practices of such of the judges and kings of Israel as had the express approbation of God; for although they may not apply as particular rules in all cases, they have to all succeeding ages the force of the general principles which are implied in them. The New Testament directions, although expressed generally, are equally comprehensive; and it is worthy of remark,

that while they assert the Divine ordination of "the powers that be," they explicitly mark out for what ends they were thus appointed, and allow, therefore, of no plea of Divine right in rulers for any thing contrary to them. "Render unto Cesar the things that are Cesar's," that is, things which are Cesar's by public law and customary impost. "For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same; for

he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain; for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil" "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake; whether it be to the king, as supreme, or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well."

In those passages, which state the legitimate ends of

government, and limit God's ordination of government to them, the duties of subjects are partially anticipated; but they are capable of a fuller enumeration.

Subjection and obedience are the first; qualified, however, as we know from the example of the apostles, with exceptions as to what is contrary to conscience and morality. In such cases they obeyed not, but suffered rather. Otherwise the rule is, "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers;" and that

not merely "for wrath," fear of punishment, but "for conscience' sake," from a conviction that it is right. "For this cause pay ye tribute also; for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render, therefore, to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor." Supplies for the necessities of government are therefore to be willingly and faithfully furnished. Rulers are also to be treated with respect and reverence:

"Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people." They are to be honoured both by external marks of respect, and by being maintained in dignity; their actions are to be judged of with candor and charity, and when questioned or blamed, this is to be done with moderation, and not with invective or ridicule, a mode of

"speaking evil of dignities," which grossly offends against the Christian rule. This branch of our duties is greatly strengthened by the enjoined duty of praying

for rulers, a circumstance which gives an efficacy to it which no uninspired system can furnish. "I exhort, therefore, that first of all supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty; for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior." This holy and salutary practice is founded upon a recognition of the ordinance of God as to government; it recognizes,

also, the existing powers in every place as God's "ministers;" it supposes that all public affairs are under Divine control; it reminds men of the arduous duties and responsibility of governors; it promotes a benevolent, grateful, and respectful feeling toward them; and it is a powerful guard against the factious and seditious spirit. These are so evidently the principles and tendencies of this sacred custom, that when prayer has been used, as it sometimes has, to convey the feelings of a malignant,

factious, or light spirit, every well-disposed mind must have been shocked at so profane a mockery, and must have felt that such prayers "for all that are in authority," were any thing but "good and accept, able in the sight of God our Savior."

Connected as these reciprocal rights and duties of rulers, and of their subjects, are with the peace, order, liberty, and welfare of society, sc that were they universally acted upon, nothing would remain to be desired for

the promotion of its peace and welfare; it is also evident that in no part of the world have they been fully observed, and, indeed, in most countries they are, to this day, grossly trampled upon. A question then arises, How far does it consist with Christian submission to endeavor to remedy the evils of a government?

On this difficult and often controverted point we must proceed with caution, and with steady respect to the principles above drawn from the word of God; and

that the subject may be less entangled, it may be proper to leave out of our consideration, for the present, all questions relating to rival supreme powers, as in the case of a usurpation, and those which respect the duty of subjects, when persecuted by their government on account of their religion.

Although government is enjoined by God, it appears to be left to men to judge in what form its purposes may, in certain circumstances, be most effectually accomplished.

No direction is given on this subject in the Scriptures. The patriarchal or family governments of the most ancient times were founded upon nature; but when two or more families were joined under one head, either for mutual defense, or for aggression, the [government] was one of choice, or it resulted from a submission effected by conquest. Here in many cases, a compact might, and in some instances did, come in, though differing in principle from "the social compact" of theoretical writers; and this

affords the only rational way of interpreting that real social compact which in some degree or other exists in all nations. In all cases where the patriarchal government was to be raised into a government common to many families, some considerable number of persons must have determined its form, and they would have the right to place it upon such fundamental principles as might seem best, provided that such principles did not interfere with the duties made obligatory by God upon every sovereign

power, and with the obligations of the subject to be governed by justice in mercy, and to be controlled from injuring others. Equally clear would be the right of the community, either en masse, or by their natural heads or representatives, to agree upon a body of laws, which should be the standing and published expression of the will of the supreme power, that so the sovereign will on all main questions might not be subject to constant changes and the caprice of an individual; and to oblige the sovereign,

as the condition of his office, to bind himself to observe these fundamental principles and laws of the state by solemn oath, which has been the practice among many nations, and especially those of the Gothic stock.

It follows from hence, that while there is an ordination of God as to government, prior to the establishment of all governments, there is no ordination of a particular man or men to govern, nor any investment of families with hereditary right. There is no such

ordination in Scripture, and we know that none takes place by particular revelation. God "setteth up one, and putteth down another," in virtue of his dominion over all things; but he does this through men themselves, as his controlled and often unconscious instruments. Hence, by St. Peter, in perfect consistency with St. Paul, the existing governments of the world are called "ordinances of men."

- "Submit to every ordinance of man" or to

every human creation or constitution, "for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme," &c. Again, as the wisdom to govern with absolute truth and justice, is not to be presumed to dwell in one man, however virtuous, so, in this state of things, the better to secure a salutary administration, there would be a right to make provision for this also, by councils, senates, parliaments, courts, or similar institutions, vested with suitable powers, to forward, but not to obstruct, the exercise of good government. And

accordingly, we can trace the rudiments of these institutions in the earliest stages of most regular governments.

These and similar arrangements, are left to human care, prudence, and patriotism; and they are in perfect accordance with the principles of sovereign right as laid down in Scripture.

It is not, however, in the forming of a new state, that any great difficulty in morals arises. It comes in when either old states, originally ill constituted,

become inadapted to the purposes of good government in a new and altered condition of society, and the supreme power refuses to adapt itself to this new state of affairs; or when in states originally well constituted, encroachments upon the public liberties take place, and great misrule or neglect is chargeable upon the executive. The question in such cases is, whether resistance to the will of the supreme power is consistent with the subjects' duty?

To answer this, resistance must be divided into two kinds, - the resistance of opinion, and the resistance of force.

As to the first, the lawfulness, nay, even the duty of it must often be allowed; but under certain qualifying circumstances. As, 1. That this resistance of opposing and inculpating opinion is not directed against government, as such, however strict, provided it be just and impartial. 2. That it is not personal against the supreme

magistrate himself, or his delegated authorities, but relates to public acts only. 3. That it springs not from mere theoretical preference of some new form of government to that actually existing, so that it has in it nothing practical. 4. That it proceeds not from a hasty, prejudiced, or malignant interpretation of the character, designs, and acts of a government. 5. That it is not factious; that is, not the result of attachment to parties, and of zeal to effect mere party objects, instead of the general good. 6. That it does not respect the

interests of a few only, or of a part of the community, or the mere local interests of some places in opposition to the just interests of other places. Under such guards as these, the respectful, but firm expression of opinion, by speech, writing, petition, or remonstrance, is not only lawful, but is often an imperative duty, a duty for which hazards even must be run by those who endeavor to lead up public opinion to place itself against real encroachments upon the fundamental laws of a state, or any serious

maladministration of its affairs. The same conclusion may be maintained under similar reserves, when the object is to improve a deficient and inadequate state of the supreme government. It is indeed especially requisite here, that the case should be a clear one; that it should be felt to be so by the great mass of those who with any propriety can be called the public; that it should not be urged beyond the necessity of the case; that the discussion of it should be temperate; that the change should be

directly connected with an obvious public good, not otherwise to be accomplished. When these circumstances meet, there is manifestly no opposition to government as an ordinance of God; no blamable resistance "to the powers that be," since it is only proposed to place them in circumstances the more effectually to fulfill the duties of their office; nothing contrary, in fact, to the original compact, the object of which was the public benefit, by rendering its government as efficient to promote the good of the

state as possible, and which therefore necessarily supposed a liability to future modifications, when the fairly collected public sentiment, through the organs by which it usually expresses itself as to the public weal, required it. The least equivocal time, however, for proposing any change in what might be regarded as fundamental or constitutional in a form of government originally ill settled, would be on the demise of the sovereign, when the new stipulations might be offered to his successor, and very

lawfully be imposed upon him.

Resistance by force may be divided into two kinds. The first is that milder one which belongs to constitutional states, that is, to those in which the compact between the supreme power and the people has been drawn out into express articles, or is found in well understood and received principles and ancient customs, imposing checks upon the sovereign will, and surrounding with guards the public liberty. The application of this

controlling power, which, in this country, is placed in a parliament, may have in it much of compulsion and force; as when parliament rejects measures proposed by the ministry, who are the organs of the will of the sovereign; or when it refuses the usual supplies for the army and navy, until grievances are redressed. The proper or improper use of this power depends on the circumstances; but when not employed factiously, nor under the influence of private feelings, nor in subservience to

unjustifiable popular clamor, or to popular demagogues; but advisedly and patriotically, in order to maintain the laws and customs of the kingdom, there is in it no infringement of the laws of Scripture as to the subjects'

obedience. A compact exists; these are the established means of enforcing it; and to them the sovereign has consented in his coronation oath.

The second kind is resistance by force of arms; and this at least must be

established before its lawfulness, in any case, however extreme, can be proved, that it is so necessary to remedy some great public evil that milder means are totally inadequate, - a point which can very seldom be made out so clearly as to satisfy conscientious men. One of three cases must be supposed:-

either that the nation enjoys good institutions which it is enlightened enough to value:- or that public liberty and other civil blessings are in

gradual progress; but that a part only of the people are interested in maintaining and advancing them, while a great body of ignorant, prejudiced, and corrupt persons are on the side of the supreme power, and ready to lend themselves as instruments of its misrule and despotism:- or, thirdly, that although the majority of the public are opposed to infringements on the constitution, yet the sovereign, in attempting to change the fundamental principles of his compact, employs his mercenary troops against his subjects,

or is aided and abetted by some foreign influence or power.

In the first case we have supposed, it does not seem possible for unjust aggressions to be successful. The people are enlightened, and attached to their institutions; and a prompt resistance of public opinion to the very first attempt of the supreme power must, in that case, be excited, and will be sufficient to arrest the evil. Accordingly, we find no instance of such a people being bereft of their liberty

by their rulers. The danger in that state of society often lies on the other side. For as there is a natural inclination in men in power to extend their authority, so in subjects there is a strong disposition to resist or evade it; and when the strength of public opinion is known in any country? there are never wanting persons, who, from vanity, faction, or interest, are ready to excite the passions, and to corrupt the feelings of the populace, and to render them suspicious and unruly; so that the

difficulty which a true patriotism will often have to contend with, is, not to repress but to support a just authority. Licentiousness in the people has often, by a re-action, destroyed liberty, overthrowing the powers by which alone it is supported.

The second case supposes just opinions and feelings on the necessity of improving the civil institutions of a country to be in some progress; that the evils of bad government are not only beginning to

be felt, but to be extensively reflected upon; and that the circumstances of a country are such that these considerations must force themselves upon the public mind, and advance the influence of public opinion in favor of beneficial changes. When this is the case, the existing evils must be gradually counteracted, and ultimately subdued by the natural operation of all these circumstances. But if little impression has been made upon the public mind, resistance would be hopeless, and, even if not

condemned by a higher principle, impolitic. The elements of society are not capable of being formed into a better system, or, if formed into it, cannot sustain it, since no form of government, however good in theory, is reducible to beneficial practice, without a considerable degree of public intelligence and public virtue. Even where society is partially prepared for beneficial changes, they may be hurried on too rapidly, that is, before sufficient previous impression has been made upon the public mind and

character, and then nothing but mischief could result from a contest of force with a bad government. The effect would be that the leaders of each party would appeal to an ignorant and bad populace, and the issue on either side would prove injurious to the advancement of civil improvement. If the despotic party should triumph, then, of course, all patriotism would be confounded with rebellion, and the efforts of moderate men to benefit their country be rendered for a

long time hopeless. If the party seeking just reforms should triumph, they could only do so by the aid of those whose bad passions they had inflamed, as was the case in the French revolution; and then the result would be a violence which, it is true, overthrows one form of tyranny, but sets up another under which the best men perish. It cannot be doubted but that the sound public opinion in France, independent of all the theories in favor of republicanism which had been circulated among a

people previously unprepared for political discussions, was sufficient to have effected, gradually, the most beneficial changes in its government; and that the violence which was excited by blind passions threw back the real liberties of that country for many years. The same effect followed the parliamentary war, excited in our own country in the reign of Charles the First. The resistance of arms was in neither case to be justified, and it led to the worst crimes. The extreme case of necessity was not

made out in either instance; and the duty of subjects to their sovereigns was grossly violated.

The third case supposed appears to be the only one in which the renunciation of allegiance is clearly justifiable; because when the contract of a king with his people is not only violated obviously, repeatedly, and in opposition to petition and remonstrance, but a mercenary soldiery is employed against those whom he is bound to protect, and the fear of

foreign force and compulsion is also suspended over them to compel the surrender of those rights which are accorded to them both by the laws of God, and the fundamental laws of the kingdom, the resistance of public feeling and sentiment, and that of the constitutional authorities, is no longer available; and such a sovereign does, in fact, lose his rights by a hostile denial of his duties, in opposition to his contract with his people. Such a case arose in this country at the revolution of

1688; it was one so clear and indubitable, as to carry with it the calm and deliberate sense of the vast majority of all ranks of society; and the whole was stamped with the character of a deliberate national act, not that of a faction. This resistance was doubtless justifiable. It involved no opposition to government as such, but was made for the purpose of serving the ends of good government, and the preservation of the very principles of the constitution. Nor did it imply any resistance to the existing power in any

respect in which it was invested with any right, either by the laws of God, or those of the realm. It will, however, appear that here was a concurrence of circumstances which rendered the case one which can very rarely occur. It was not the act of a few individuals; nor of mere theorists in forms of government; nor was it the result of unfounded jealousy or alarm; nor was it the work of either the populace on the one hand, or of an aristocratic faction on the other; but of the people under their natural

guides and leaders, - the nobility and gentry of the land: nor were any private interests involved, the sole object being the public weal, and the maintenance of the laws. When such circumstances and principles meet, similar acts may be justified; but in no instance of an equivocal character.

The question of a subject's duty in case of the existence of rival supreme powers, is generally a very difficult one, at least for some time. When the question of right which lies

between them divides a nation, he who follows his conscientious opinion as to this point is doubtless morally safe, and he ought to follow it at the expense of any inconvenience. But when a power is settled de facto in the possession of the government, although the right of its claim should remain questionable in the minds of any, there appears a limit beyond which no man can be fairly required to withhold his full allegiance. Where that limit lies it is difficult to say, and individual conscience must have

considerable latitude; but perhaps the general rule may be, that when continued resistance would be manifestly contrary to the general welfare of the whole, it is safe to conclude that He who changes the "powers that be" at his sovereign pleasure, has in his providence permitted or established a new order of things to which men are bound to conform.

Whether men are at liberty to resist their lawful princes when persecuted by them for conscience'

sake, is a question which brings in additional considerations; because of that patience and meekness which Christ has enjoined upon his followers when they suffer for his religion. When persecution falls upon a portion only of the subjects of a country, it appears their clear duty to submit, rather than to engage in plots and conspiracies against the persecuting power; practices which never can consist with Christian moderation and truth. But when it should fall upon a people constituting a

distinct state, though united politically with some other, as in the case of the Waldenses, then the persecution, if carried to the violation of liberty, life, and property, would involve the violation of political rights also, and so nullify the compact which has guaranteed protection to all innocent subjects. A national resistance on these grounds would, for the foregoing reasons, stand on a very different basis.

No questions of this kind can come before a

Christian man, however, without placing him under the necessity of considering the obligation of many duties of a much clearer character than, in almost any case, the duty of resistance to the government under which he lives, can be. He is bound to avoid all intemperance and uncharitableness, and he is not, therefore, at liberty to become a factious man; he is forbidden to indulge malignity, and is restrained therefore from revenge; he is taught to be distrustful of his own judgment, and

must only admit that of the wise and good to be influential with him; he must therefore avoid all association with low and violent men, the rabble of a state, and their designing leaders; he is bound to submission to rulers in all cases where a superior duty cannot be fairly established; and he is warned of the danger of resistance "to the power," as bringing after it Divine "condemnation," wherever the case is not clear, and not fully within the principles of the word of God. So circumstanced, the

allegiance of a Christian people is secured to all governors, and to all governments, except in very extreme cases which can very seldom arise in the judgment of any who respect the authority of the word of God; and thus this branch of Christian morality is established upon principles which at once uphold the majesty of [government,] and throw their shield over the liberties of the people; principles which in the wisdom of God beautifully entwine [fidelity,] freedom, and peace.

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PART FOUR: THE INSTITUTIONS OF CHRISTIANITY

54 THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

The Church of Christ, in its largest sense, consists of all who have been baptized in the name of Christ, and who thereby make a visible profession of faith in his Divine mission, and in all the doctrines taught by him and his inspired apostles.

In a stricter sense, it consists of those who are vitally united to Christ, as the members of the body to the head, and who, being thus imbued with spiritual life, walk no longer "after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Taken in either view, it is a visible society, bound to observe the laws of Christ, its sole Head and Lord. Visible fellowship with this Church is the duty of all who profess faith in Christ; for in this, in part, consists that"confession of Christ before men," on which so much stress is

laid in the discourses of our Lord.

It is obligatory on all who are convinced of the truth of Christianity to be baptized; and upon all thus baptized frequently to partake of the Lord's Supper, in order to testify their continued faith in that great and distinguishing doctrine of the religion of Christ, the redemption of the world by the sacrificial effusion of his blood, both of which suppose union with his Church. The ends of this fellowship or association

are, to proclaim our faith in the doctrine of Christ as Divine in its origin, and necessary to salvation; to offer public prayers and thanksgivings to God through Christ, as the sole Mediator; to hear God's word explained and enforced; and to place ourselves under that discipline which consists in the enforcement of the laws of Christ, (which are the rules of the society called the Church,) upon the members, not merely by general exhortation, but by kind oversight, and personal injunction and

admonition of its ministers. All these flow from the original obligation to avow our faith in Christ, and our love to him.

The Church of Christ being then a visible and permanent society, bound to observe certain rites, and to obey certain rules, the existence of government in it is necessarily supposed. All religious rites suppose order, all order direction and control, and these a directive and controlling power.

Again, all laws are nugatory without enforcement, in the present mixed and imperfect state of society; and all enforcement supposes an executive. If baptism be the door of admission into the Church, some must judge of the fitness of candidates, and administrators of the rite must be appointed; if the Lord's Supper must be partaken of, the times and the mode are to be determined, the qualifications of communicants judged of, and the administration placed in suitable hands; if

worship must be social and public, here again there must be an appointment of times, an order, and an administration; if the word of God is to be read and preached, then readers and preachers are necessary; if the continuance of any one in the fellowship of Christians be conditional upon good conduct, so that the purity and credit of the Church may be guarded, then the power of enforcing discipline must be lodged somewhere. Thus government flows necessarily from the very nature of the institution of

the Christian Church; and since this institution has the authority of Christ and his apostles, it is not to be supposed that its government was left unprovided for; and if they have in fact made such a provision, it is no more a matter of mere option with Christians whether they will be subject to government in the Church, than it is optional with them to confess Christ by becoming its members.

The nature of this government, and the persons to whom it is

committed, are both points which we must briefly examine by the light of the Holy Scriptures.

As to the first, it is wholly spiritual:- "My kingdom," says our Lord, "is not of this world." The Church is a society founded upon faith, and united by mutual love, for the personal edification of its members in holiness, and for the religious benefit of the world. The nature of its government is thus determined;- it is concerned only with spiritual objects. It cannot

employ force to compel men into its pale; for the only door of the Church is faith, to which there can be no compulsion,

- "he that believeth and is baptized" becomes a member. It cannot inflict pains and penalties upon the disobedient and refractory, like civil governments; for the only punitive discipline authorized in the New Testament, is comprised in "admonition," "reproof," "sharp rebukes," and, finally, "excision from the society." The last will be

better understood if we consider the special relations in which true Christians stand to each other, and the duties resulting from them. They are members of one body, and are therefore bound to tenderness and sympathy; they are the conjoint instructors of others, and are therefore to strive to be of "one judgment;" they are brethren, and they are to love one another as such, that is, with an affection more special than that general good will which they are commanded to bear to all mankind; they

are therefore to seek the intimacy of friendly society among themselves, and, except in the ordinary and courteous intercourse of life, they are bound to keep themselves separate from the world; they are enjoined to do good unto all men, but "specially to them that are of the household of faith;"

and they are forbidden "to eat" at the Lord's table with immoral persons, that is, with those who, although they continue their Christian profession, dishonor it by their

practice. With these relations of Christians to each other and to the world, and their correspondent duties before our minds, we may easily interpret the nature of that extreme discipline which is vested in the Church. "Persons who will not hear the Church" are to be held "as heathen men and publicans,"

as those who are not members of it; that is, they are to be separated from it, and regarded as of

"the world," quite out of the range of the above-

mentioned relations of Christians to each other, and their correspondent duties; but still, like "heathen men and publicans," they are to be the objects of pity, and general benevolence. Nor is this extreme discipline to be hastily inflicted before "a first and second admonition," nor before those who are "spiritual" have attempted "to restore a brother overtaken by a fault;" and when the "wicked person" is "put away," still the door is to be kept open for his reception again upon repentance.

The true excommunication of the Christian Church is therefore a merciful and considerate separation of an incorrigible offender from the body of Christians, without any infliction of civil pains or penalties. "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which ye have received from us," 2 Thess. 3:6. "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump," 1 Cor. 5:5.

"But now I have written to you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such a one, no not to eat," 1 Cor. 5:11. This then is the moral discipline which is imperative upon the Church of Christ, and its government is criminally defective whenever it is not enforced. On the other hand, the disabilities and penalties which established Churches in different places have connected with these sentences of

excommunication, have no countenance at all in Scripture, and are wholly inconsistent with the spiritual character and ends of the Christian association.

As to the second point, - the persons to whom the government of the Church is committed, it is necessary to consider the composition, so to speak, of the primitive Church, as stated in the New Testament.

A full enunciation of these offices we find in Ephesians 4:11: "And he

gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Of these, the office of apostle is allowed by all to have been confined to those immediately commissioned by Christ to witness the fact of his miracles and of his resurrection from the dead, and to reveal the complete system of Christian doctrine and duty; confirming their extraordinary mission by

miracles wrought by themselves. If by "prophets" we are to understand persons who foretold future events, then the office was, from its very nature, extraordinary, and the gift of prophecy has passed away with the other miraculous endowments of the first age of Christianity. If, with others, we understand that these prophets were extraordinary teachers raised up until the Churches were settled under permanent qualified instructors; still the office was temporary. The

"evangelists" are generally understood to be assistants of the apostles, who acted under their especial authority and direction. Of this number were Timothy and Titus; and as the Apostle Paul directed them to ordain bishops or presbyters in the several Churches, but gave them no authority to ordain successors to themselves in their particular office as evangelists, it is clear that the evangelists must also be reckoned among the number of extraordinary and temporary ministers suited to the first age of

Christianity. Whether by "pastors and teachers" two offices be meant, or one, has been disputed. The change in the mode of expression seems to favor the latter view, and so the text is interpreted by St. Jerome, and St. Augustine; but the point is of little consequence.

A pastor was a teacher; although every teacher might not be a pastor; but in many cases be confined to the office of subordinate instruction, whether as an expounder of doctrine, a catechist, or even a more private instructor of those

who as yet were unacquainted with the first principles of the Gospel of Christ. The term pastor implies the duties both of instruction and of government, of feeding and of ruling the flock of Christ; and, as the presbyters or bishops were ordained in the several Churches, both by the apostles and evangelists, and rules are left by St.

Paul as to their appointment, there can be no doubt but that these are the "pastors" spoken of in the Epistle to the

Ephesians, and that they were designed to be the permanent ministers of the Church; and that with them both the government of the Church and the performance of its leading religious services were deposited. Deacons had the charge of the gifts and offerings for charitable purposes, although, as appears from Justin Martyr, not in every instance; for he speaks of the weekly oblations as being deposited with the chief minister, and distributed by him.

Whether bishops and presbyters be designations of the same office, or these appellatives express two distinct sacred orders, is a subject which has been controverted by Episcopalians and Presbyterians with much warmth; and whoever would fully enter into their arguments from Scripture and antiquity, must be referred to this controversy, which is too large to be here more than glanced at. The argument drawn by the Presbyterians from the promiscuous use of these terms in the New

Testament, to prove that the same order of ministers is expressed by them, appears incontrovertible. When St. Paul, for instance, sends for the "elders," or presbyters, of the Church of Ephesus to meet him at Miletus, he thus charges them, "Take heed to yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers," or bishops. That here the elders or presbyters are called "bishops." cannot be denied, and the very office assigned to them, to "feed the Church of God," and

the injunction, to "take heed to the flock," show that the office of elder or presbyter is the same as that of "pastor" in the passage just quoted from the Epistle to the Ephesians. St. Paul directs Titus to "ordain elders (presbyters) in every city," and then adds, as a directory of ordination, "a bishop must be blameless, &c," plainly marking the same office by these two convertible appellations. "Bishops and deacons" are the only classes of ministers addressed in the Epistle to the Philippians;

and if the presbyters were not understood to be included under the term "bishops," the omission of any notice of this order of ministers is not to be accounted for. As the apostles, when not engaged in their own extraordinary vocation, appear to have filled the office of stated ministers in those Churches in which they occasionally resided for considerable periods of time, they sometimes called them-selves presbyters. "The elder," presbyter, "unto the elect lady," 2 John 1:1. "The

elders (presbyters) which are among you, I exhort, who am also an elder," (presbyter,) and from what follows, the highest offices of teaching and government in the Church are represented as vested in the presbyters. "Feed the flock of God, which is among you, taking the oversight thereof." There seems, therefore, to be the most conclusive evidence, from the New Testament, that, after the extraordinary minis, try vested in apostles, prophets, and evangelists, as mentioned by St. Paul,

had ceased, the feeding and oversight, that is, the teaching and government of the Churches, devolved upon an order of men indiscriminately called "pastors," "presbyters," and "bishops," the two latter names growing into most frequent use; and with this the testimony of the apostolical fathers, so far as their writings are acknowledged to be free from later interpolations, agrees.

It is not indeed to be doubted, that, at a very early period, in some

instances probably from the time of the apostles themselves, a distinction arose between bishops and presbyters; and the whole strength of the cause of the Episcopalians lies in this fact. Still this gives not the least sanction to the notion of bishops being a superior order of ministers to presbyters, invested, in virtue of that order, and by Divine right, with powers of government both over presbyters and people, and possessing exclusively the authority of ordaining to the sacred offices of the Church.

As little too will that ancient distinction be found to prove any thing in favor of diocesan episcopacy, which is of still later introduction.

Could it be made clear that the power of ordaining to the ministry was given to bishops to the exclusion of presbyters, that would indeed go far to prove the former a distinct and superior order of ministers in their original appointment. But there is no passage in the New Testament which gives this power at all to bishops, as

thus distinguished from presbyters; while all the examples of ordination which it exhibits are confined to apostles, to evangelists, or to presbyters, in conjunction with them. St. Paul, in 2 Tim.1:6, says, "Wherefore I put thee in remembrance, that thou stir up the gift of God which is in thee, by the putting on of my hands;" but in 1 Tim. 4:14, he says, "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery;" which two passages, referring, as they

plainly do, to the same event, the setting apart of Timothy for the ministry, show that the presbytery were associated with St. Paul in the office of ordination, and farther prove that the exclusive assumption of this power, as by Divine right, by bishops, is an aggression upon the rights of presbyters, for which not only can no Scriptural authority be pleaded, but which is in direct opposition to it.

The early distinction made between bishops and

presbyters may be easily accounted for, without allowing this assumed distinction of order. In some of the Churches mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, the apostles ordained several elders or presbyters, partly to supply the present need, and to provide for the future increase of believers, as it is observed by Clemens in his epistle.

Another reason would also urge this:- Before the building of spacious edifices for the assemblies of the Christians living in

one city, and in its neighborhood, in common, their meetings for public worship must necessarily have been held in different houses or rooms obtained for the purpose; and to each assembly an elder would be requisite for the performance of worship. That these elders or presbyters had the power of government in the Churches cannot be denied, because it is expressly assigned to them in Scripture. It was inherent in their pastoral office; and "the elders that rule well," were to be

"counted worthy of double honor." A number of elders, therefore, being ordained by the apostles to one Church, gave rise to the caetus presbyterorum, in which assembly the affairs of the Church were attended to, and measures taken for the spread of the Gospel, by the aid of the common counsel and efforts of the whole.

This meeting of presbyters would naturally lead to the appointment, whether by seniority or by election, of one to preside over the proceedings of this

assembly for the sake of order; and to him was given the title of angel of the Church, and bishop by way of eminence. The latter title came in time to be exclusively used of the presiding elder, because of that special oversight imposed upon him by his office, and which, as Churches were raised up in the neighborhood of the larger cities, would also naturally be extended over them. Independently of his fellow presbyters, however, he did nothing.

The whole of this arrangement shows, that in those particulars in which they were left free by the Scriptures, the primitive Christians adopted that arrangement for the government of the Church which promised to render it most efficient for the maintenance of truth and piety; but they did not at this early period set up that unscriptural distinction of order between bishops and presbyters, which obtained afterward. Hence Jerome, even in the fourth century, contends against this doctrine, and says, that

before there were parties in religion, Churches were governed communi consilio presbyterorum; but that afterward it became a universal practice, founded upon experience of its expediency, that one of the presbyters should be chosen by the rest to be the head, and that the care of the Church should be committed to him. He therefore exhorts presbyters to remember that they are subject by the custom of the Church to him that presides over them; and reminds bishops that they are greater than

presbyters, rather by custom than by the appointment of the Lord; and that the Church ought still to be governed in common.

The testimony of antiquity also shows, that, after episcopacy had very greatly advanced its claims, the presbyters continued to be associated with the bishop in the management of the affairs of the Church.

Much light is thrown upon the constitution of the primitive Churches, by recollecting that they were formed very much upon

the model of the Jewish synagogues. We have already seen that the mode of public worship in the primitive Church was taken from the synagogue service, and so also was its arrangement of offices. Each synagogue had its rulers, elders, or presbyters, of whom one was the angel of the Church, or minister of the synagogue, who superintended the public service; directed those that read the Scriptures, and offered up the prayers, and blessed the people. The president of the council of

elders or rulers was called, by way of eminence, the "ruler of the synagogue;" and in some places, as Acts 13:15, we read of these "rulers" in the plural number; a sufficient proof that one was not elevated in order above the rest. The angel of the Church, and the minister of the synagogue, might be the same as he who was invested with the office of president; or these offices might be held by others of the elders. Lightfoot, indeed, states that the rulers in each synagogue

were three, while the presbyters or elders were ten. To this council of grave and wise men, the affairs of the synagogue, both as to worship and discipline, were committed. In the synagogue they sat by themselves in a semicircle, and the people before them, face to face. This was the precise form in which the bishop and presbyters used to sit in the primitive Churches. The description of the worship of the synagogue by a Jewish rabbi, and that of the primitive Church by early Christian writers, presents

an obvious correspondence. "The elders," says Maimonides, "sit with their faces toward the people, and their backs to the place where the law is deposited; and all the people sit rank before rank; so the faces of all the people are toward the sanctuary, and toward the elders; and when the minister of the sanctuary standeth up to prayer, he standeth with his face toward the sanctuary, as do the rest of the people." In the same order the first Christians sat with their faces toward the bishops

and presbyters, first to hear the Scriptures read by the proper reader; "then," says Justin Martyr, "the reader sitting down, the president of the assembly stands up and makes a sermon of instruction and exhortation; after this is ended, we all stand up to prayers; prayers being ended, the bread, wine, and water are all brought forth; then the president again praying and praising to his utmost ability, the people testify their consent by saying, Amen." (Apol 2.) "Here we have the Scriptures read by one

appointed for that purpose, as in the synagogue; after which follows the word of exhortation by the president of the assembly, who answers to the minister of the synagogue; after this, public prayers are performed by the same person; then the solemn acclamation of amen by the people, which was the undoubted practice of the synagogue." (Stilling-fleets Irenicum.) Ordination of presbyters or elders is also from the Jews. Their priests were not ordained, but succeeded to their office by birth; but the

rulers and elders of the synagogue received ordination by imposition of hands and prayer.

Such was the model which the apostles followed in providing for the future regulation of the Churches they had raised up. They took it, not from the temple and its priesthood; for that was typical, and was then passing away. But they found in the institution of synagogues a plan admirably adapted to the simplicity and purity of Christianity, one to which some of the first converts

in most places were accustomed, and which was capable of being applied to the new dispensation without danger of Judaizing. It secured the assembling of the people on the Sabbath, the reading of the Scriptures, the preaching of sermons, and the offering of public prayer and thanksgiving. It provided too for the government of the Church by a council of presbyters, ordained solemnly to their office by imposition of hands and prayer; and it allowed of that presidency of one

presbyter chosen by the others, which was useful for order and for unity, and by which age, piety, and gifts might preserve their proper influence in the Church. The advance from this state of Scriptural episcopacy to episcopacy under another form was the work of a later age.

When the Gospel made its way into towns and villages, the concerns of the Christians in these places naturally fell under the cognizance and direction of the bishops of the neighboring cities.

Thus dioceses were gradually formed, comprehending districts of country, of different extent These dioceses were originally called paroikiai, parishes, and the word dioikhsis, dioceses, was not used in its modern sense till at least the fourth century; and when we find Ignatius describing it as the duty of a bishop, "to speak to each member of the Church separately, to seek out all by name, even the slaves of both sexes, and to advise every one of the flock in the affair of marriage," dioceses, as one

observes, must have been very limited, or the labor inconceivably great.

"As Christianity increased and overspread all parts, and especially the cities of the empire, it was found necessary yet farther to enlarge the Episcopal office; and as there was commonly a bishop in every great city, so in the metropolis, (as the Romans called it,) the mother city of every province, (wherein they had courts of civil judicature,) there was an archbishop or a metropolitan, who had

ecclesiastical jurisdiction over all the Churches within that province. He was superior to all the bishops within those limits; to him it belonged to ordain or to ratify the elections and ordinations of all the bishops within his province, insomuch that without his confirmation they were looked upon as null and void. Once at least every year he was to summon the bishops under him to a synod, to inquire into and direct the ecclesiastical affairs within that province; to inspect the lives and manners, the

opinions and principles of his bishops; to admonish, reprove, and suspend them that were disorderly and irregular; if any controversies or contentions happened between any of them, he was to have the hearing and determination of them; and indeed no matter of moment was done within the whole province, without first consulting him in the case. When this office of metropolitan first began, I find not; only this we are sure of, that the council of Nice, settling the just rights and privileges of

metropolitan bishops, speaks of them as a thing of ancient date, ushering in the canon with an archaia eth krateito, Let ancient customs still take place. The original of the institution seems to have been partly to comply with the people's occasions, who oft resorted to the metropolis for dispatch of their affairs, and so might fitly discharge their civil and ecclesiastical both at once; and partly because of the great confluence of people to that city: that the bishop of it might have pre-eminence above the rest,

and the honor of the Church bear some proportion to that of the state.

"After this sprung up another branch of the Episcopal office, as much superior to that of metropolitans, as theirs was to ordinary bishops; these were called primates and patriarchs, and had jurisdiction over many provinces. For the understanding of this, it is necessary to know, that when Christianity came to be fully settled in the world, they contrived to

model the external government of the Church, as near as might be, to the civil government of the Roman empire; the parallel is most exactly drawn by an ingenious person of our own nation; the sum of it is this:-

The whole empire of Rome was divided into thirteen dioceses, (so they called those divisions,) these contained about one hundred and twenty provinces, and every province several cities.

Now, as in every city there was a temporal magistrate

for the executing of justice, and keeping the peace, both for that city and the towns round about it; so was there also a bishop for spiritual order and government, whose jurisdiction was of like extent and latitude. In every province there was a proconsul or president, whose seat was usually at the metropolis, or chief city of the province; and hither all inferior cities came for judgment in matters of importance. And in proportion to this there was in the same city an archbishop or

metropolitan, for matters of ecclesiastical concernment. Lastly, in every dioceses the emperors had their vicarii or lieutenants, who dwelt in the principal city of the dioceses, where all imperial edicts were published, and from whence they were sent abroad into the several provinces, and where was the chief tribunal where all causes not determinable elsewhere, were decided. And, to answer this, there was in the same city a primate, to whom the last determination of all appeals from all the

provinces in differences of the clergy, and the sovereign care of all the dioceses for sundry points of spiritual government, did belong. This, in short, is the sum of the account which that learned man gives of this matter. So that the patriarch, as superior to the metropolitans, was to have under his jurisdiction not any one single province, but a whole dioceses, (in the old Roman notion of that word,) consisting of many provinces. To him belonged the ordination of all the metropolitans that were

under him, as also the summoning them to councils, the correcting and reforming the misdemeanors they were guilty of; and from his judgment and sentence, in things properly within his cognizance, there lay no appeal. To this I shall only add what Salmasius has noted, that as the dioceses that was governed by the vicarius had many provinces under it, so the prafectus praetorio had several dioceses under him: and in proportion to this, probable it was, that patriarchs were first

brought in, who, if not superior to primates in jurisdiction and power, were yet in honor, by reason of the dignity of those cities where their sees were fixed, as at Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem" (Cave's Primitive Christianity.) Thus diocesan bishops, metropolitans, primates, patriarchs, and finally the pope, came in, which offices are considered as corruptions or improvements; as dictated by the necessities of the Church, or as instances of

worldly ambition; as of Divine right, or from Satan; according to the different views of those who have written on such subjects. As to them all it may, however, be said, that, so far as they are pleaded for as of Divine right, they have no support from the New Testament; and if they are placed upon the only ground on which they can be reasonably discussed, that of necessity and good polity, they must be tried by circumstances, and their claims of authority be so defined that it may be known how far they are

compatible with those principles with which the New Testament abounds, although it contains no formal plan of Church government. The only Scriptural objection to episcopacy, as it is understood in modern times, is its assumption of superiority of order, of an exclusive right to govern the pastors as well as the flock, and to ordain to the Christian ministry. These exclusive powers are by the New Testament no where granted to bishops in distinction from presbyters. The

government of pastors as well as people, was at first in the assembly of presbyters, who were individually accountable to that ruling body, and that whether they had a president or not. So also as to ordination; it was a right in each, although used by several together, for better security; and even when the presence of a bishop came to be thought necessary to the validity of ordination, the presbyters were not excluded.

As for the argument from the succession of bishops

from the times of the apostles, could the fact be made out, it would only trace diocesan bishops to the bishops of parishes; those, to the bishops of single Churches; and bishops of a supposed superior order, to bishops who never thought themselves more than presiding presbyters, primi inter pares. This therefore would only show that an unscriptural assumption of distinct orders has been made, which that succession, if established, would refute. But the succession itself is

imaginary. Even Epiphanies, a bishop of the fourth century, gives this account of things, "that the apostles were not able to settle all things at once. But according to the number of believers, and the qualifications for the different offices which those whom they found appeared to possess, they appointed in some places only a bishop and deacons; in others presbyters and deacons; in others a bishop, presbyters, and deacons:" - a statement fatal to the argument from succession. As for the

pretended catalogues of bishops of the different Churches from the days of the apostles, exhibited by some ecclesiastical writers, they are filled up by forgeries and inventions of later times. Eusebius, more honest, begins his catalogue with declaring, that it is not easy to say who were the disciples of the apostles that were appointed to feed the Churches which they planted, excepting only those whom we read of in the writings of St. Paul.

Whether episcopacy may not be a matter of prudential regulation, is another question. We think it often may; and that Churches are quite at liberty to adopt this mode, provided they maintain St. Jerome's distinction, that "bishops are greater than presbyters rather by custom than by appointment of the Lord, and that still the Church ought to be governed in common," that is, by bishops and presbyters united. It was on this ground that Luther placed

episcopacy, - as useful, though not of Divine right; it was by admitting this liberty in Churches, that Calvin and other divines of the Reformed Churches allowed episcopacy and diocesan Churches to be lawful, there being nothing to forbid such an arrangement in Scripture, when placed on the principle of expediency. Some divines of the English Church have chosen to defend its episcopacy wholly upon this ground, as alone tenable; and, admitting that it is safest to approach

as near as possible to primitive practice, have proposed the restoration of presbyters as a senate to the bishop, the contraction of dioceses, the placing of bishops in all great towns, and the holding of provincial synods;- thus raising the presbyters to their original rank, as the bishop's "compresbyters" as Cyprian himself calls them, both in government and in ordinations.

As to that kind of episcopacy which trenches upon no Scriptural principle, much depends

upon circumstances, and the forms in which Christian Churches exist. When a Church composes but one congregation, the minister is unquestionably a Scriptural bishop; but he is, and can be, only bishop of the flock, episcopus gregis. Of this kind, it appears from the extract given above from Epiphanius, were some of the primitive Churches, existing, probably, in the smaller and more remote places. Where a number of presbyters were ordained to one Church, these would, in their common

assembly, have the oversight and government of each other as well as of the people; and, in this their collective capacity, they would be episcopi gregis et pastorum. In this manner, episcopacy, as implying the oversight and government both of ministers and their flocks, exists in Presbyterian Churches, and in all others, by whatever name they are called, where ministers are subject to the discipline of assemblies of ministers who admit to the ministry by joint consent, and censure or remove those

who are so appointed. When the ancient presbyteries elected a bishop, he might remain, as he appears to have done for some time, the mere president of the assembly of presbyters, and their organ of administration; or be constituted, as afterward, a distinct governing power, although assisted by the advice of his presbyters. He was then in person an episcopus gregis et pastorum, and his official powers gave rise at length to the unfounded distinction of superior order. But abating this

false principle, even diocesan episcopacy may be considered as in many possible associations of Churches throughout a province, or a whole country, as an arrangement in some circumstances of a wise and salutary nature. Nor do the evils which arose in the Church of Christ appear so attributable to this form of government as to that too intimate connection of the Church with the state, which gave to the former a political character, and took it from under the salutary control of public

opinion, - an evil greatly increased by the subsequent destruction of religious liberty, and the coercive interferences of the civil magistrate.

At the same time, it may be very well questioned, whether any presbyters could lawfully surrender into the hands of a bishop their own rights of government and ordination without that security for their due administration which arises from the accountability of the administrator.

That these are rights which it is not imperative upon the individual possessing them to exercise individually, appears to have the judgment of the earliest antiquity, because the assembly of presbyters, which was probably co-existent with the ordination of several presbyters to one Church by the apostles, necessarily placed the exercise of the office of each under the direction and control of all. When therefore a bishop was chosen by the presbyters, and invested with the government, and

the power of granting orders, so long as the presbyters remained his counsel, and nothing was done but by their concurrence, they were still parties to the mode in which their own powers were exercised, and were justifiable in placing the administration in the hands of one, who was still dependent upon themselves. In this way they probably thought that their own powers might be most efficiently and usefully exercised. Provincial and national synods or councils,

exercising a proper superintendence over bishops when made even more independent of their presbyters than was the case in the best periods of the primitive Church, might also, if meeting frequently and regularly, and as a part of an ecclesiastical system, afford the same security for good administration, and might justify the surrender of the exercise of their powers by the presbyters. But when that surrender was formerly made, or is at any time made now in the constitution of Churches,

to bishops, or to those bearing a similar office however designated, without security and control, either by making that office temporary and elective, or by the constitution of synods or assemblies of the ministers of a large and united body of Christians for the purpose of supreme government, an office is created which has not only no countenance in Scripture, that of a bishop independent of presbyters, but one which implies an unlawful surrender of those powers, on the part

of the latter, with which they were invested, not for their own sakes, but for the benefit of the Church; and which they could have no authority to divest themselves of and to transfer, without retaining the power of counseling and controlling the party charged with the administration of them. In other words, presbyters have a right, under proper regulations, to appoint another to administer for them, or to consent to such an arrangement when they find it already existing, but they have no power to

divest themselves of these rights and duties absolutely. If these principles be sound, modern episcopacy, in many Churches, is objectionable in other respects than as it assumes an un-scriptural distinction of order.

The following is a liberal concession on the subject of episcopacy from a strenuous defender of that form of government as it exists in the Church of England:-

"It is not contended that the bishops, priests, and

deacons, of England, are at present precisely the same that bishops, presbyters, and deacons, were in Asia Minor seventeen hundred years ago.

We only maintain that there have always been bishops, priests, and deacons, in the Christian Church, since the days of the apostles, with different powers and functions, it is allowed, in different countries and at different periods; but the general principles and duties which have respectively characterized these clerical

orders, have been essentially the same at all times, and in all places; and the variations which they have undergone, have only been such as have ever belonged to all persons in public situations, whether civil or ecclesiastical, and which are indeed inseparable from every thing in which mankind are concerned in this transitory and fluctuating world.

"I have thought it right to take this general view of the ministerial office, and to make these observations upon the clerical orders

subsisting in this kingdom, for the purpose of pointing out the foundation and principles of Church authority, and of showing that our ecclesiastical establishment is as nearly conformable, as change of circumstances will permit, to the practice of the primitive Church. But, though I flatter myself that I have proved episcopacy to be an apostolical institution, yet I readily acknowledge that there is no precept in the New Testament which commands that every Church should be governed

by bishops. No Church can exist without some government; but though there must be rules and orders for the proper discharge of the offices of public worship, though there must be fixed regulations concerning the appointment of ministers, and though a subordination among them is expedient in the highest degree, yet it does not follow that all these things must be precisely the same in every Christian country; they may vary with the other varying circumstances of human

society, with the extent of a country, the manners of its inhabitants, the nature of its civil government, and many other peculiarities which might be specified. As it has not pleased our almighty Father to prescribe any particular form of civil government for the security of temporal comforts to his rational creatures, so neither has he prescribed any particular form of ecclesiastical polity as absolutely necessary to the attainment of eternal happiness. But he has, in the most explicit terms, enjoined obedience to all

governors, whether civil or ecclesiastical, and whatever may be their denomination, as essential to the character of a true Christian. Thus the Gospel only lays down general principles, and leaves the application of them to men as free agents." (Bishop Tomline's Elements.) Bishop Tomline, however, and the high Episcopalians of the Church of England, contend for an original distinction in the office and order of bishops and presbyters, in which notion they are contradicted by one who may be truly

called the founder of the Church of England, Archbishop Cranmer, who says, "The bishops and priests were at one time, and were not two things; but both one office in the beginning of Christ's religion." (Stillingjleei's Irenicum, p. 392.) On the subject of the church itself, opinions as opposite or varying as possible have been held, down from that of the papists, who contend for its visible unity throughout the world under a visible head, to that of the Independents, who consider the universal

Church as composed of congregational Churches, each perfect in itself, and entirely independent of every other.

The first opinion is manifestly contradicted by the language of the apostles, who, while they teach that there is but one Church, composed of believers throughout the world, think it not at all inconsistent with this to speak of "the Churches of Judea," "of Achaia," "the seven Churches of Asia," "the Church at Ephesus," &c. Among themselves the

apostles had no common head; but planted Churches and gave directions for their government, in most cases without any apparent correspondence with each other. The popish doctrine is certainly not found in their writings, and so far were they from making provision for the government of this one supposed Church, by the appointment of one visible and exclusive head, that they provide for the future government of the respective Churches raised up by them, in a totally different manner, that is,

by the ordination of ministers for each Church, who are indifferently called bishops, and presbyters, and pastors. The only unity of which they speak is the unity of the whole Church in Christ, the invisible Head, by faith; and the unity produced by "fervent love toward each other." Nor has the popish doctrine of the visible unity of the Church any countenance from early antiquity. The best ecclesiastical historians have showed, that, through the greater part of the second century, "the

Christian Churches were independent of each other. Each Christian assembly was a little state governed by its own laws, which were either enacted, or at least approved by the society. But in process of time, all the Churches of a province were formed into one large ecclesiastical body, which, like confederate states, assembled at certain times in order to deliberate about the common interests of the whole." (Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, cent. 2, chap, ii.) So far indeed this union of Churches appears to have been a wise

and useful arrangement, although afterward it was carried to an injurious extreme, until finally it gave birth to the assumptions of the bishop of Rome, as universal bishop; a claim, however, which when most successful, was but partially submitted to, the Eastern Churches having always maintained their independence. No very large association of Churches of any kind existed till toward the close of the second century, which sufficiently refutes

the papal argument from antiquity.

The independence of the early Christian Churches does not, however, appear to have resembled that of the Churches which in modern times are called Independent. During the lives of the apostles and evangelists, they were certainly subject to their counsel and control, which proves that the independency of separate societies was not the first form of the Church. It may, indeed, be allowed, that some of the smaller and

more insulated Churches might, after the death of the apostles and evangelists, retain this form for some considerable time; but the larger Churches, in the chief cities, and those planted in populous neighborhoods, had many presbyters, and as the members multiplied, they had several separate assemblies or congregations, yet all under the same common government. And when Churches were raised up in the neighborhood of cities, the appointment of chorepiscopi, or country

bishops, and of visiting presbyters, both acting under the presbytery of the city, with its bishop at its head, is sufficiently in proof, that the ancient Churches, especially the larger and more prosperous of them, existed in that form, which in modern times we should call a religious connection, subject to a common government. This appears to have arisen out of the very circumstance of the increase of the Church, through the zeal of the first Christians; and in the absence of all direction by

the apostles, that every new society of believers raised should be formed into an independent Church, it was doubtless much more in the spirit of the very first discipline exercised by the apostles and evangelists, (when none of the Churches were independent, but remained under the government of those who had been chiefly instrumental in raising them up,) to place themselves under a common inspection, and to unite the weak with the strong, and the newly converted with those who

were "in Christ before them." There was also in this, greater security afforded both for the continuance of wholesome doctrine, and of godly discipline.

The persons appointed to feed and govern the Church of Christ being, then, as we have seen, those who are called "pastors" a word which imports both care and government, two other subjects claim our attention, - the share which the body of the people have in their own government by their pastors, and the

objects toward which the power of government, thus established, in the Church, is legitimately directed.

As to the first, some preliminary observations may be necessary.

1. When Churches are professedly connected with, and exclusively patronized and upheld by, the state, questions of ecclesiastical government arise, which are of greater perplexity and difficulty than when they are left upon their original ground, as voluntary and spiritual associations. The state will

not exclusively recognize ministers without maintaining some control over their functions; and will not lend its aid to enforce the canons of an established Church, without reserving to itself some right of appeal, or of interposition. Hence a contest between the civil and ecclesiastical powers often springs up, and one at least generally feels itself to be fettered by the other. When an established Church is perfectly tolerant, and the state allows freedom of dissent and separation from it

without penalties, these evils are much mitigated. But it is not my design to consider a Church as at all allied with the state; but as deriving nothing from it except protection, and that general countenance which the influence of a government, professing Christianity and recognizing its laws, must afford.

2. The only view in which the sacred writers of the New Testament appear to have contemplated the Churches, was that of associations founded upon

conviction of the truth of Christianity, and the obligatory nature of the commands of Christ. They considered the pastors as dependent for their support upon the free contributions of the people; and the people as bound to sustain, love, and obey them in all things lawful, that is, in all things agreeable to the doctrine they had received in the Scriptures, and, in things indifferent, to pay respectful deference to them. They enjoined it upon the pastors to "rule well," "diligently," and with

fidelity, in executing the directions they had given them;- to silence all teachers of false doctrines, and their adherents;-

to re-prove unruly and immoral members of the Church, and, if incorrigible, to put them away.

On the other hand, should any of their pastors or teachers err in doctrine, the people are enjoined not "to receive them," to "turn away" from them, and not even to bid them "God speed." The rule which forbids Christians "to eat," that is, to communicate at

the Lord's table with an immoral

"brother," held, of course, good, when that brother was a pastor. Thus pastors were put by them under the influence of the public opinion of the Churches; and the remedy of separating from them, in manifest defections of doctrine and morals, was afforded to the sound members of a Church, should no power exist, able or inclined to silence the offending pastor and his party. In all this, principles were recognized, which,

had they not been in future times lost sight of or violated, would have done much, perhaps every thing, to preserve some parts of the Church, at least, in soundness of faith, and purity of manners. A perfect religious liberty is always supposed by the apostles to exist among Christians; no compulsion of the civil power is any where assumed by them as the basis of their advices or directions; no binding of the members to one Church, without liberty to join another, by any ties but those involved in moral

considerations, of sufficient weight, however, to prevent the evils of faction and schism. It was this which created a natural and competent check upon the ministers of the Church; for being only sustained by the opinion of the Churches, they could not but have respect to it; and it was this which gave to the sound part of a fallen Church the advantage of renouncing, upon sufficient and well-weighed grounds, their communion with it, and of kindling up the light of a pure ministry and a holy discipline, by forming

a separate association, bearing its testimony against errors in doctrine, and failures in practice. Nor is it to be conceived, that, had this simple principle of perfect religious liberty been left unviolated through subsequent ages, the Church could ever have become so corrupt, or with such difficulty and slowness have been recovered from its fall. This ancient Christian liberty has happily been restored in a few parts of Christendom.

3. In places where now the communion with particular Churches, as to human authority, is perfectly voluntary, and liberty of conscience is unfettered, it often happens that questions of Church government are argued on the assumption that the governing power in such Churches is of the same character, and tends to the same results, as where it is connected with civil influence, and is upheld by the power of the state.

Nothing can be more fallacious, and no

instrument has been so powerful as this in the hands of the restless and factious, to delude the unwary. Those who possess the governing power in such Churches, are always under the influence of public opinion to an extent unfelt in establishments.

They can enforce nothing felt to be oppressive to the members in general without dissolving the society itself; and their utmost power extends to excision from the body, which, unlike the sentences of excommunication in

state Churches, is wholly unconnected with civil penalties. If, then, a resistance is created to any regulations among the major part of any such religious community, founded on a sense of their injurious operation, or to the manner of their enforcement; and if that feeling be the result of a settled conviction, and not the effervescence of temporary mistake and excitement, a change must necessarily ensue, or the body at large be disturbed or dissolved: if, on the other hand, this feeling1 be

the work of a mere faction, partial tumults or separation may take place, and great moral evil may result to* the factious parties, but the body will retain its communion, which will be a sufficient proof that the governing power has been the subject of ungrounded and uncharitable attack, since otherwise the people at large must have felt the evils of the general regulations or administration complained of. The very terms often used in the grand controversy arising out of

the struggle for the establishment of religious liberty with national and intolerant Churches, are not generally appropriate to such discussions as may arise in voluntary religious societies, although they are often employed, either carelessly or ad captandum, to serve the purposes of faction.

4. It is also an important general observation, that, in settling the government of a Church, there are pre-existent laws of Christ, which it is not in the option of any to receive or to

reject. Under whatever form the governing power is arranged, it is so bound to execute all the rules left by Christ and his apostles, as to doctrine, worship, the sacraments, and discipline, honestly interpreted, that it is not at liberty to take that office, or to continue to exercise it, if by any restrictions imposed upon it, it is prevented from carrying these laws into effect. As in the state, so in the Church, government is an ordinance of God; and as it is imperative upon rulers in the state to be "a terror to evil doers, and a

praise to them that do well," so also is it imperative upon the rulers of the Church to banish strange doctrines, to uphold God's ordinances, to reprove and rebuke, and, finally, to put away evil doers. The spirit in which this is to be done is also prescribed. It is to be done in the spirit of meekness, and with long suffering; but the work must be done upon the responsibility of the pastors to Him who has commissioned them for this purpose; and they have a right to require from the people, that in this office

and ministry they should not only not be obstructed, but affectionately and zealously aided, as ministering in these duties, sometimes painful, not for themselves, but for the good of the whole. With respect to the members of a Church, the same remark is applicable as to the members of a state. It is not matter of option with them whether they will be under government according to the laws of Christ or not, for that is imperative; government in both cases being of Divine appointment. They have,

on the other hand, the right to full security, that they shall be governed by the laws of Christ; and they have a right too to establish as many guards against human infirmity and passion in those who are "set over them," as maybe prudently devised, provided these are not carried to such an extent as to be obstructive to the legitimate Scriptural discharge of their duties. The true view of the case appears to be, that the government of the Church is in its pastors, open to various modifications as to

form; and that it is to be conducted with such a concurrence of the people, as shall constitute a sufficient guard against abuse, and yet not prevent the legitimate and efficient exercise of pastoral duties, as these duties are stated in the Scriptures. This original authority in the pastors, and concurrent consent in the people, may be thus applied to particular cases:-

1. As to the ordination of ministers. If we consult the New Testament, this office was never conveyed by the

people. The apostles were ordained by our Lord; the evangelists, by the apostles; the elders in every Church, both by apostles and evangelists. The passage which has been chiefly urged by those who would originate the ministry from the people, is Acts 14:23, where the historian, speaking of St. Paul and Barnabas, says, "And when they had ordained (cheirotoneo) elders in every Church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord." Here, because cheirotoneo originally

signified to choose by way of suffrage, some have argued that these elders were appointed by the suffrages of the people. Long, however, before the time of St. Luke, this word was used for simple designation, without any reference to election by suffrages; and so it is employed by St. Luke himself in the same book, Acts 10:41, "Witnesses foreappointed of God," where of course the suffrages of men are out of the question. It is also fatal to the argument drawn from the text, that the act

implied in the word, whatever it might be, was not the act of the people, but that of Paul and Barnabas. Even the deacons, whose appointment is mentioned Acts 6: although "looked out" by the disciples as men of honest report, did not enter upon their office till solemnly "appointed" thereto by the apostles. Nothing is clearer in the New Testament, than that all the candidates for the ministry were judged of by those who had been placed in that office themselves,

and received their appointment from them.

Such too was the practice of the primitive Churches after the death of both apostles and evangelists. Presbyters, who during the life of the apostles had the power of ordination, (for they laid their hands upon Timothy,) continued to perform that office in discharge of one solemn part of their duty, to perpetuate the ministry, and to provide for the wants of the Churches. In the times of the apostles, who were endued with

special gifts, the concurrence of the people was not, perhaps, always formally taken; but the directions to Timothy and Titus imply a reference to the judgment of the members of the Church, because from them only it could be learned whether the party fixed upon for ordination possessed those qualifications without which ordination was prohibited. When the Churches assumed a more regular form, "the people were always present at ordinations, and ratified the action with their

approbation and consent. To this end the bishop was wont before every ordination to publish the names of those who were to have holy orders conferred upon them, that so the people, who best knew their lives and conversation, might interpose if they had any thing material to object against them." (Cave's Primitive Christianity.) Some-times also they nominated them by suffrages, and thus proposed them for ordination. The mode in which the people shall be

made a concurrent party is matter of prudential regulation; but they had an early, and certainly a reasonable right to a voice in the appointment of their ministers, although the power of ordination was vested in ministers alone, to be exercised on their responsibility to Christ.

2. As to the laws by which the Church is to be governed. So far as they are manifestly laid down in the word of God, and not regulations judged to be subsidiary thereto, it is plain that the rulers of a

Church are bound to execute them, and the people to obey them. They cannot be matter of compact on either side, except as the subject of a mutual and solemn engagement to defer to them without any modification or appeal to any other standard.

Every Church declares in some way, how it understands the doctrine and the disciplinary laws of Christ. This declaration as to doctrine, in modern times, is made by confessions or articles of

faith, in which, if fundamental error is found, the evil rests upon the head of that Church collectively, and upon the members individually, every one of whom is bound to try all doctrines by the Holy Scriptures, and cannot support an acknowledged system of error without guilt. As to discipline, the manner in which a Church provides for public worship, the publication of the Gospel, the administration of the sacraments, the instruction of the ignorant, the succor of the distressed, the

admonition of the disorderly, and the excision of offenders, (which are all points on which the New Testament has issued express injunctions,) is its declaration of the manner in which it interprets those injunctions, which also it does on its own collective responsibility, and that of its members. If, however, we take for illustration of the subject before us, a Church at least substantially right in this its interpretation of doctrine, and of the laws of Christ as to general, and what we may call, for

distinction's sake, moral discipline; these are the first principles upon which this Church is founded. It is either an apostolic Church, which has retained primitive faith and discipline; or it has subsequently been collected into a new communion, on account of the fall of other Churches; and has placed itself, according to its own conviction, upon the basis of primitive doctrine and discipline as found in the Scriptures. On this ground either the pastors and people met and united at

first; or the people, converted to faith and holiness by the labors of one or more pastors, holding, as they believe, these Scriptural views, placed themselves under the guidance of these pastors, and thus formed themselves into, a Church state, which was their act of accession to these principles. It is clear, therefore, that by this very act, they bind themselves to comply with the original terms of the communion into which they have entered, and that they have as to these doctrines, and

as to these disciplinary laws of Christ, which are to be preached and enforced, no rights of control over ministers, which shall prevent the just exercise of their office in these respects. They have a right to such regulations and checks as shall secure, in the best possible way, the just and faithful exercise of that office, and the honest and impartial use of that power; but this is the limit of their right; and every system of suffrages, or popular concurrence, which, under pretence of guarding against abuse of

ministerial authority, makes its exercise absolutely and in all cases dependent upon the consent of those over whom it extends, goes beyond that limit, and invades the right of pastoral government, which the New Testament has established. It brings, in a word, the laws of Christ into debate, which yet the members profess to have received as their rule; and it claims to put into commission those duties which pastors are charged by Christ personally to exercise. The Apostle Paul,

had the incestuous person at Corinth denied the crime, and there had been any doubtfulness as to the fact, would unquestionably have taken the opinion of the elders of that Church and others upon that fact; but when it became a question whether the laws of Christ's discipline should be exercised or not, he did not feel himself concluded by the sense of the whole Corinthian Church, which was in favor of the offender continuing in communion with them; but he instantly reproved them for their laxity, and issued the

sentence of excision, thereby showing that an obvious law of Christ was not to be subjected to the decision of a majority.

This view indeed supposes, that such a society, like almost all the Churches ever known, has admitted in the first instance, that the power of admission into the Church, of reproof, of exhortation, and of excision from it, subject to various guards against abuses, is in the pastors of a Church. There are some who have adopted a different opinion,

supposing that the power of administering the discipline of Christ must be conveyed by them to their ministers, and is to be wholly controlled by their suffrages; so that there is in these systems, not a provision of counsel against possible errors in the exercise of authority; not a guard against human infirmity or viciousness; not a reservation of right to determine upon the fitness of the cases to which the laws of Christ are applied; but a claim of co-administration as to these laws themselves, or rather

an entire administration of them through the pastor, as a passive agent of their will. Those who adopt these views are bound to show that this is the state of things established in the New Testament. That it is not, appears plain from the very term "pastors" which imports both care and government; mild and affectionate government indeed, but still government. Hence the office of shepherd is applied to describe the government of God, and the government of kings. It appears too, from other

titles given, not merely to apostles, but to the presbyters they ordained and placed over the Churches. They are called hegemon, rulers; episkopos, overseers; horoestotes, those who preside. They are commended for "ruling well;" and they are directed "to charge," "to reprove," "to rebuke," "to watch," "to silence," "to put away." The very "account" they must give to God, in connection with the discharge of these duties, shows that their office and responsibility was peculiar and personal,

and much greater than that of any private member of the Church, which it could not be if they were the passive agents only in matters of doctrine and discipline of the will of the whole. To the double duty of feeding and exercising the oversight of the flock, a special reward is also promised when the "Chief Shepherd shall appear," - a title of Christ, which shows that as the pastoral office of feeding and ruling is exercised by Christ supremely, so it is exercised by his ministers in both branches

subordinately. Finally, the exhortations to Christians to "obey them that have the rule over them," and to "submit" to them, and "to esteem them very highly for their works' sake," and to "remember them;" - all show that the ministerial office is not one of mere agency, under the absolute direction of the votes of the collected Church.

3. With respect to other disciplinary regulations, supposed by any religious society to be subsidiary to the great and Scriptural ends of Church

communion, these appear to be matters of mutual agreement, and are capable of modification by the mutual consent of ministers and people, under their common responsibility to Christ, that they are done advisedly, with prayer, with reference to the edification of the Church, and so as not to infringe upon, but to promote, the influence of the doctrines, duties, and spirit of the Gospel. The consent of the people to all such regulations, either tacitly by their adoption of them, or more expressly

through any regular meetings of different officers, who may be regarded as acquainted with, and representing the sentiments of the whole; as also by the approval of those aged, wise, and from different causes, influential persons, who are to be found in all societies and who are always, whether in office or not, their natural guardians, guides, and representatives, is necessary to confidence and harmony, and a proper security for good and orderly government. It is thus that those to whom

the government or well ordering of the Church is committed, and those upon whom their influence and Scriptural authority exert themselves, appear to be best brought into a state of harmony and mutual confidence; and that abundant security is afforded against all misrule, seeing that in a voluntary communion, and where perfect liberty exists for any member to unite himself to other Churches, or for any number of them to arrange themselves into a new community, subject however to the moral

cautions of the New Testament against the schismatic spirit, it can never be the interest of those with whom the regulation of the affairs of a Church is lodged, voluntarily to adopt measures which can be generally felt to be onerous and injurious, nor is it practicable to persevere in them. In this method of bringing in the concurrence of the people, all assemblages of whole societies, or very large portions of them, are avoided, - a popular form of Church government,

which, however it were modified so as best to accord with the Scriptural authority of ministers, could only be tolerable in very small isolated societies, and that in the times of their greatest simplicity and love. To raise into legislators and censors all the members of a Church, the young, the ignorant, and the inexperienced, is to do them great injury. It is the sure way to foster debates, contentions, and self confidence, to open the door to intrigue and policy, to tempt forward and

conceited men to become a kind of religious demagogues, and entirely to destroy the salutary influence of the aged, experienced, and gifted members, by referring every decision to members and suffrages, and placing all that is good and venerable, and influential among the members themselves, at the feet of a democracy.

4. As to the power of admission into the Church, that is clearly with ministers, to whom the office of baptism is

committed, by which the door is opened into the Church universal; and as there can be no visible communion kept up with the universal Church, except by communion with some particular Church, the admission into that particular communion must be in the hands of ministers, because it is one of the duties of their office, made such by the Scripture itself, to enjoin this mode of confessing Christ, by assembling with his saints in worship by submitting to discipline, and by "showing forth his death" at the

Lord's Supper. We have, however, already said, that the members of a Church, although they have no right to obstruct the just exercise of this power, have the right to prevent its being unworthily exercised; and their concurrence with the admission, tacit or declared, according to their usages, is an arrangement, supported by analogies, drawn from the New Testament, and from primitive antiquity. The expulsion of unworthy members, after admonition, devolves upon those to whom the

administration of the sacraments, the signs of communion, is entrusted, and therefore upon ministers, for this reason, that as "shepherds" of the flock under the "Chief Shepherd," they are charged to carry his laws into effect. These laws, it is neither with them nor with the people to modify; they are already declared by superior authority; but the determination of the facts of the case to which they are to be applied, is matter of mutual investigation and decision, in order to prevent an erring or an

improper exercise of authority. That such investigation should take place, not before the assembled members of a society, but before proper and select tribunals, appears not only an obviously proper, but, in many respects, a necessary regulation.

The trial of unworthy ministers remains to be noticed, which, where-ever a number of religious societies exist as one Church, having therefore many pastors, is manifestly most safely placed in the

hands of those pastors themselves, and that not only because the official acts of censure and exclusion lie with them, but for other reasons also. It can scarcely happen that a minister should be under accusation, except in some very particular cases, but that, from his former influence, at least with a part of the people, some faction would be found to support him. In proportion to the ardor of this feeling, the other party would be excited to undue severity and bitterness. To try such a case before a whole

society, there would not only be the same objection as in the case of private members; but the additional one, that parties would be more certainly formed, and be still more violent. If he must be arraigned then before some special tribunal, the most fitting is that of his brethren, provided that the parties accusing have the right to bring on such a trial upon exhibition of probable evidence, and to prosecute it without obstruction. In Churches whose ministers are thrown solely upon the

public opinion of the society, and exist as such only by their character, this is ordinarily a sufficient guard against the toleration of improper conduct; while it removes the trial from those whose excitement for or against the accused might on either side be unfavorable to fair and equitable decision, and to the peace of the Church.

The above remarks contain but a sketch of those principles of Church government which appear to be contained in, or to be suggested by, the New

Testament. They still leave much liberty to Christians to adopt them in detail to the circumstances in which they are placed. The offices to be created 5 the meetings necessary for the management of the various affairs of the Church, spiritual and financial; the assembling of ministers in larger or smaller numbers for counsel, and for oversight of each other, and of the Churches to which they belong, are all matters of this kind, and are left to the suggestions of wisdom and piety. The extent to which distinct

societies of Christians shall associate in one Church, under a common government, appears also to be a matter of prudence and of circumstances. In the primitive Church we see different societies in a city and its neighborhood under the common government of the assembly of presbyters; and afterward these grew into provincial Churches, of greater or smaller extent. In modern times, we have similar associations in the form of national Churches, Episcopal or Presbyterian;

and of Churches existing without any recognition of the state at all, and forming smaller or larger communities, from the union of a few societies, to the union of societies throughout a whole country; holding the same doctrines, practicing the same modes of worship, and placing themselves under a common code of laws and a common government. But whatever be the form they take, they are bound to respect, and to model themselves by, the principles of Church communion and of Church

discipline which are contained in the New Testament; and they will be fruitful in holiness and usefulness, so long as they conform to them, and so long as those forms of administration are conscientiously preferred which appear best adapted to preserve and to diffuse sound doctrine, Christian practice, spirituality, and charity. That discipline is defective and bad in itself, or it is ill administered, which does not accomplish these ends; and that is best which best promotes them.

The ends to which Church authority is legitimately directed remain to be briefly considered.

The first is, the preservation and the publication of "sound doctrine." Against false doctrines, and the men "of corrupt minds" who taught them, the sermons of Christ, and the writings of the apostles, abound in cautions; and since St. Paul lays it down as a rule, as to erring teachers, that their "mouths must be stopped," this implies, that the power of declaring what sound

doctrine is, and of silencing false teachers, was confided by the apostles to the future Church. By systematic writers this has been called potestas dogmatiks; which, abused by the ambition of man forms no small part of that antichristian usurpation which characterizes the Church of Rome. Extravagant as are her claims, so that she brings in her traditions as of equal authority with the inspired writings, and denies to men the right of private judgment, and of trying her dogmas by the test of the

Holy Scriptures; there is a sober sense in which this power may be taken. The great Protestant principle, that the Holy Scriptures are the only standard of doctrine; that the doctrines of every Church must be proved out of them; and that to this standard every individual member has the right of bringing them, in order to the confirmation of his own faith, must be held inviolate, if we would not see Divine authority displaced by human. Since, however, men may come to different conclusions upon the meaning of Scripture, it

has been the practice from primitive times to declare the sense in which Scripture is understood by collective assemblies of ministers, and by the Churches united with them, in order to the enforcement of such interpretations upon Christians generally, by the influence of learning, piety, numbers, and solemn deliberation. The reference of the question respecting circumcision by the Church at Antioch to "the apostles and elders at Jerusalem," is the first instance of this, though with this

peculiarity, that, in this case, the decision was given under plenary inspiration. While one of the apostles lived, an appeal could be made to him in like manner when any doctrinal novelty sprung up in the Church. After their death, smaller or larger councils, composed of the public teachers of the Churches, were resorted to, that they might pronounce upon these differences of opinion, and by their authority confirm the faithful, and abash the propagators of error. Still

later, four councils, called general, from the number of persons assembled in them from various parts of Christendom, have peculiar eminence. The council of Nice, in the fourth century, which condemned the Arian heresy, and formed that Scriptural and important formulary called the Nicene Creed; the council of Constantinople, held at the end of the same century, which condemned the errors of Macedonius, and asserted the Divinity and personality of the Holy Ghost; and the councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon,

about the middle of the fifth century, which censured the opinions of Nestorius and Eutyches. At Nice it was declared that the Son is truly God, of the same substance with the Father; at Constantinople, that the Holy Ghost is also truly God; at Ephesus, that the Divine nature was truly united to the human in Christ, in one person; at Chalcedon, that both natures remained distinct, and that the human nature was not lost or absorbed in the Divine. The decisions of these councils, both from their antiquity and from

the manifest conformity of their decisions on these points to the Holy Scriptures, have been received to this day in what have been called the orthodox Churches, throughout the world. On general councils, the Romish Church has been divided as to the questions, whether infallibility resides in them, or in the pope, or in the pope when at their head. Protestants cut this matter short by acknowledging that they have erred, and may err, being composed of fallible men, and that they have no

authority but as they manifestly agree with the Scriptures. To the above-mentioned councils they have in general always paid great deference, as affording confirmation of the plain and literal sense of Scripture on the points in question; but on no other ground. "Things ordained by general councils as necessary to salvation, have neither strength nor authority, unless it may be declared they be taken out of Holy Scripture." (Twenty-first Article of the Church of England.) The manner in

which the respective Churches of the reformation declared their doctrinal interpretation of the Scriptures on the leading points of theology, was by confessions and articles of faith, and by the adoption of ancient or primitive creeds. With reference to this practice, no doubt it is, that the Church of England declares in her twentieth article, that "the Church hath authority in controversies of faith;" but qualifies the tenet by adding, "and yet it is not lawful for the Church to ordain any thing that is

contrary to God's word written;" in which there is a manifest recognition of the right of all who have God's word in their hands, to make use of it in order to try what any Church "ordains," as necessary to be believed. This authority of a Church in matters of doctrine appears then to be reduced to the following particulars, which, although directly opposed to the assumptions of the Church of Rome, are of great importance:-

1. To declare the sense in which it interprets the

language of Scripture on all the leading doctrines of the Christian revelation; for to contend, as some have done, that no creeds or articles of faith are proper, but that belief in the Scriptures only ought to be required, would be to destroy all doctrinal distinctions, since the most perverse interpreters of Scripture profess to believe the words of Scripture. 2. To require from all its members, with whom the right of private judgment is by all Protestant Churches left inviolate, to examine such declarations of faith

professing to convey the sense of Scripture with modesty and proper respect to those grave and learned assemblies in which all these points have been weighed with deliberation; receiving them as guides to truth, not implicitly, it is true, but still with docility and humility. "Great weight and deference is due to such decisions, and every man that finds his own thoughts differ from them ought to examine the matter over again with much attention and care, freeing himself all he can

from prejudice and obstinacy, with a just distrust of his own understanding, and an humble respect to the judgment of his superiors. This is due to the consideration of peace and union, and to that authority which the Church has to maintain it; but if, after all possible methods of inquiry, a man cannot master his thoughts, or make them agree with the public decisions, his conscience is not under bonds, since this authority is not absolute, nor grounded upon a promise

of infallibility." (Burnet.) 3. To silence within its own pale the preaching of all doctrines contrary to the received standards. On this every Church has a right to insist which sincerely believes that contrary doctrines to its own are fundamental or dangerous errors, and which is thereby bound both to keep its members from their contamination, and also to preserve them from those distractions and controversies to which the preaching of diverse doctrines by its ministers would inevitably lead. Nor

is there any thing in the exercise of this authority contrary to Christian liberty, since the members of any communion, and especially the ministers, know beforehand the terms of fellowship with the Churches whose confessions of faith are thus made public; and because also, where conscience is unfettered by public law, they are neither prevented from enjoying their own opinions in peace, nor from propagating them in other assemblies.

The second end is, the forming of such regulations for the conduct of its ministers, officers, and members, as shall establish a common order for worship; facilitate the management of the affairs of the community, spiritual, economical, and financial; and give a right direction to the general conduct of the whole society. This in technical language is called potestas diataktikh, and consists in making canons, or rules, for those particular matters which are not provided for in detail by the directions

of Scripture. This power also, like the former, has been carried to a culpable excess in many Churches, so as to fill them with superstition, and in many respects to introduce an onerous system of observances, like that of Judaism, the yoke from which the Gospel has set us free. The simplicity of Christianity has thus been often destroyed, and the

"doctrines of men" set up "as commandments of God." At the same time, there is a sound sense in which this power in a

Church must be admitted, and a deference to it bound upon the members. For, when the laws of Christ are both rightly understood and cordially admitted, the application of them to particular cases is still necessary; many regulations also are dictated by inference and by analogies, and often appear to be required by the spirit of the Gospel, for which there is no provision in the letter of Scripture. The obligation of public worship, for instance, is plainly stated; but the seasons of its observance,

its frequency, and the mode in which it is to be conducted, must be matter of special regulation, in order that all things may be done "decently and in order." The observance of the Sabbath is binding; but particular rules guarding against such acts, as in the judgment of a Church are violations of the law of the Sabbath, are often necessary to direct the judgment and consciences of the body of the people. Baptism is to be administered; but a Church may prescribe the manner of this service, since the

Scriptures have not determined it. So also as to the mode and the times of receiving the Lord's Supper, in the same absence of inspired directions regulations must be agreed upon, that there may be, as nearly as edification requires, an undistracted uniformity of practice. Special festivals of commemoration and thanksgivings may also be appointed, as fit occasions for the inculcation of particular truths, and moral duties, and for the special excitement of grateful affections. For

although they are not particularly prescribed in Scripture, they are in manifest accordance with its spirit, and are sanctioned by many of the examples which it exhibits. Days of fasting and humiliation, for the same reasons, may be the subject of appointment; and beside the regular acts of public worship, private meetings of the members for mutual prayer and religious converse may also be found necessary. To these may be added, various plans for the instruction of children, the visitation and relief of

the sick, and the introduction of the Gospel into neglected neighborhoods, and its promotion in foreign lands. A considerable number of other regulations touching order, contributions, the repressing of particular vices which may mark the spirit of the times, and the practice of particular duties, will also be found necessary.

The only legitimate ends, however, of all these directions and rules, are, the edification of the Church; the preservation of

its practical purity; the establishment of an influential order and decorum in its services; and the promotion of its usefulness to the world. The general principles by which they are to be controlled, are the spirituality, simplicity, and practical character of Christianity; and the authority with which they are invested, is derived from piety, wisdom, and singleness of heart, in those who originate them, and from that docility and submissiveness of Christians to each other,

which is enforced upon them in the New Testament. For although every Christian is exhorted to "try all things." to "search the Scriptures," and to exercise his best judgment, in matters which relate to doctrine, discipline, and practice, yet he is to do this in the spirit of a Christian; not with self willedness, and self confidence; not contemning the opinion and authority of others; not factiously and censoriously. This is his duty even where the most important subjects are in question;

how much more then in things comparatively indifferent ought he to practice the apostolic rule: "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder; yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility."

The third end of Church government is the infliction and removal of censurers, a power (potestas diakritikh) the abuse of which, and the extravagant lengths to which it has been carried, have led some wholly to deny it, or to treat it slightly; but which is

nevertheless deposited with every Scriptural Church. Even associations much less solemn and spiritual in their character, have the power to put away their members, and to receive again, upon certain conditions, those who offend against their rules; and if the offence which called forth this expulsion be of a moral nature, the censure of a whole society, inflicted after due examination, comes with much greater weight, and is a much greater reproach and misfortune to the person who falls under it,

than that of a private individual. In the case of a Christian Church, however, the proceeding connects itself with a higher than human authority. The members have separated from the world, and have placed themselves under the laws of Christ. They stand in a special relation to him, so long as they are faithful; they are objects of his care and love, as members of his own body; and to them, as such, great and numerous promises are made. To preserve them in this state of fidelity, to guard them

from errors of doctrine and viciousness of practice, and thus to prevent their separation from Christ, the Church with its ministry, its ordinances, and its discipline was established. He who becomes unfaithful in opposition to the influence of those edifying and conservatory means, forfeits the favor of Christ, even before he is deservedly separated from the Church; but when he is separated, put away, denied communion with the Church, he loses also the benefit of all those peculiar means of grace

and salvation, and of those special influences and promises which Christ bestows upon the Church. He is not only thrown back upon common society with shame, stigmatized as an "evil worker," by the solemn sentence of a religious tribunal; but becomes, so to speak, again a member of that incorporated and hostile society, the world, against which the exclusive and penal sentences of the word of God are directed. Where the sentence of excision by a Church is erring or vicious, as it may

be in some cases, it cannot affect an innocent individual; he would remain, notwithstanding the sentence of men, a member of Christ's invisible universal Church; but when it proceeds upon a just application of the laws of Christ, there can be no doubt of its ratification in heaven, although the door is left open to penitence and restoration.

In proportion, however, as a sober and serious Christian, having those views, wishes to keep up in his own mind, and in the

minds of others, a proper sense of the weight and solemnity of Church censures when rightly administered, he will feel disgusted at those assumptions of control over the mercy and justice of God, which fallible men have in some Churches endeavored to establish, and have too often exercised for the gratification of the worst passions.

So because our Lord said to Peter, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven," and

"whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven," which is also said Matt. 18:18, to all the apostles, "it came to be understood that the sentence of excommunication, by its own intrinsic authority, condemned to eternal punishment; that the excommunicated person could not be delivered from this condemnation, unless the Church gave him absolution; and that the Church had the power of

absolving him upon the private confession of his fault, either by prescribing to him certain acts of penance, and works of charity, the performance of which was considered as a satisfaction for the sin which he had committed, or by applying to him the merits of some other person. And as in the progress of corruption, the whole power of the Church was supposed to be lodged in the pope, there flowed from him, at his pleasure, indulgences or remissions of some parts of the penance, absolutions, and

pardons, the possession of which was represented to Christians as essential to salvation, and the sale of which formed a most gainful traffic."

As to the passage respecting the gift of the keys of the kingdom of heaven to Peter, from which these views affect to be derived, it is most naturally explained by the very apposite and obviously explanatory fact, that this apostle was the first preacher of the Gospel dispensation in its perfected form, both to the

Jews at the day of pentecost, and afterward to the Gentiles. Bishop Horsley applies it only to the latter of these events, to which indeed it may principally, but not exclusively, refer.

"St. Peter's custody of the keys was a temporary, not a perpetual authority: its object was not individuals, but the whole human race. The kingdom of heaven upon earth is the true Church of God. It is now therefore the Christian Church: formerly the

Jewish Church was that kingdom.

The true Church is represented in this text, as in many passages of Holy Writ, under the image of a walled city, to be entered only at the gates. Under the Mosaic economy these gates were shut, and particular persons only could obtain admittance, - Israelites by birth, or by legal incorporation. The locks of these gates were the rites of the Mosaic law, which obstructed the entrance of aliens. But, after our Lord's ascension,

and the descent of the Holy Ghost, the keys of the city were given to St. Peter, by that vision which taught him, and authorized him to teach others, that all distinctions of one nation from another were at an end. By virtue of this special commission, the great apostle applied the key, pushed back the bolt of the lock, and threw the gates of the city open for the admission of the whole Gentile world, in the instance of Cornelius and his family." (Horsley's Sermons.)

When the same learned prelate would also refer the binding and loosing power mentioned in the above texts exclusively to Peter, he forgets that in the passage above referred to, Matt. 18:18, it is given to all the apostles, "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." These expressions manifestly refer to the authoritative declaration of any thing to be obligatory, and its infraction to be sinful, and therefore subject to punishment, or

the contrary; and the passage receives sufficient illustration from the words of our Lord to his apostles, after his resurrection, when, after breathing upon them, he said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted to them; and whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained," John 20:22, 23. To qualify them for this authoritative declaration of what was obligatory upon men, or otherwise; and of the terms upon which sins are "remitted," and the circumstances under which

they are "retained;" they previously received the Holy Ghost, - a sufficient proof that this power was connected with the plenary inspiration of the apostles; and beyond those inspired men it could not extend, unless equally strong miraculous evidence of the same degree of inspiration were afforded by any others. The manner also in which the apostles exercised this power elucidates the subject. We have no instance at all of their forgiving the sins of any individuals; they merely proclaimed the

terms of pardon. And we have no instance of their "retaining" the sins of any one, except by declaring them condemned by the laws of the Gospel, of which they were the preachers. They authoritatively explain in their writings the terms of forgiveness; they state as to duty what is obligatory, and what is not obligatory, upon Christians; they pronounce sinners of various kinds, impenitent and unbelieving, to be under God's wrath; and they declare certain apostates to be put beyond

forgiveness by their own act, not by apostolic excommunication; and thus they bind and loose, remit sins and retain them. The meaning of these passages is in this manner explained by the practice of the apostles themselves, and we may also see the reason why in Matthew 18, a similar declaration stands connected with the censures of a Church: "Moreover, if thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy

brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church; but if he neglect to hear the Church let him be unto thee as a heathen man and as a publican; verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

That here there may be a reference to a provision made among the Jews for settling questions of accusation and dispute by the elders of their synagogues, is probable; but it is also clear that our Lord looked forward to the establishment of his own Church, which was to displace the synagogue; and that there might be infallible rules to guide that Church in its judgment on moral cases, he turns to the disciples, to whom the discourse is addressed, and says to them,

"Whatsoever ye, "not the Church, "shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Of the disciples then present the subsequent history leads us to conclude, that he principally meant that the apostles should be endued with this power, and that they were to be the inspired persons who were to furnish "the Church" with infallible rules of judgment, in all such cases of dispute and accusation. When, therefore, any Church rightly interprets these

apostolic rules, and rightly applies them to particular cases, it then exercises a discipline which is not only approved, but is also confirmed, in heaven by the concurring dispensations of God, who respects his own inspirations in his apostles. The whole shows the careful and solemn manner in which all such investigations are to be conducted, and the serious effect of them. It is by the admonishing and putting away of offenders, that the Church bears its testimony against all sin before the

world; and it is thus that she maintains a salutary influence over her members, by the well-grounded fear of those censures which, when Scripturally administered, are sanctioned by Christ its Head; and which, when they extend to excision from the body, and no error of judgment, or sinister intention, vitiates the proceeding, separate the offenders from that special grace of Christ which is promised to the faithful collected into a Church state, - a loss, an evil, and a danger, which

nothing but repentance, humiliation, and a return to God and his people, can repair. For it is to be observed, that this part of discipline is an ordinance of Christ, not only for the maintenance of the character of his Churches, and the preservation of their influence in the world; but for the spiritual benefit of the offenders themselves. To this effect are the words of the Apostle Paul as to the immoral Corinthian, - "to deliver such a one to Satan, for the destruction of the flesh" the dominion of his

bodily appetites, "that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." The practice of many of the ancient Churches was, in this respect, rigid; in several of the circumstances far too much so; and thus it assumed a severity much more appalling than in the apostolic times. It shows, however, how deeply the necessity of maintaining moral discipline was felt among them, and in substance, though not in every part of the mode, is worthy of remembrance. "When disciples of Christ,

who had dishonored his religion by committing any gross immorality, or by relapsing into idolatry, were cut off from the Church by the sentence of excommunication; they were kept, often for years, in a state of penance, however desirous to be re-admitted. They made a public confession of their faith, accompanied with the most humiliating expressions of grief.

For some time they stood without the doors, while the Christians were employed in worship.

Afterward they were allowed to enter; then to stand during a part of the service; then to remain during the whole: but they were not permitted to partake of the Lord's Supper, till a formal absolution was pronounced by the Church. The time of the penance was sometimes shortened, when the anguish of their mind, or any occasional distress of body, threatened the danger of their dying in that condition, or when those who were then suffering persecution, or other

deserving members of the Church interceded for them, and became, by this intercession, in some measure, sureties for their future good behavior. The duration of the penance, the acts required while it continued, and the manner of the absolution, varied at different times. The matter was, from its nature, subject to much abuse; it was often taken under the cognizance of ancient councils; and a great part of their canons was employed in regulating the exercise of discipline." (Hill's Lectures.)

In concluding this chapter, it may be observed, that however difficult it may be, in some cases, to adjust modes of Church government, so that in the view of all, the principles of the New Testament may be fully recognized, and the ends for which Churches are collected may be effectually accomplished, this labor will always be greatly smoothed, by a steady regard, on each side, to duties as well as to rights. These are equally imperative upon ministers, upon subordinate officers, and upon the private

members of every Church. Charity, candor, humility, public spirit, zeal, a forgiving spirit, and the desire, the strong desire, of unity and harmony, ought to pervade all, as well as a constant remembrance of the great and solemn truth, that Christ is the Judge, as well as the Savior of his Churches. While the people are docile; obedient to the word of exhortation; willing to submit, "in the Lord," to those who "preside over them," and are charged to exercise Christ's discipline; and while ministers are "gentle

among them," after the example of St. Paul, - a gentleness, however, which, in his case, winked at no evil, and kept back no truth, and compromised no principle, and spared no obstinate and incurable offender, - while they feed the flock of Christ with sound doctrine, and are intent upon their edification, watching over them "as they that must give account," and study, live, and labor, for no other ends, than to present that part of the Church committed to their care "perfect in Christ Jesus;"

every Church will fall as it were naturally and without effort into its proper "order." Pure and undefiled religion in Churches, like the first poetry, creates those subordinate rules by which it is, afterward, guarded and governed; and the best canons of both are those which are dictated by the fresh and primitive effusions of their own inspiration.

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55 INSTITUTIONS OF CHRISTIANITY - THE SACRAMENTS

The number of sacraments is held by all Protestants to be but two, - Baptism, and the Lord's Supper; because they find no other instituted in the New Testament, or practiced in the early Church. The superstition of the Church of Rome has added no fewer than five to the number, -

Confirmation, penance, orders, matrimony, and, extreme unction.

The word used by the Greek fathers for sacrament was musterion- In the New Testament this word always means, as Campbell has showed, either a secret, - something unknown till revealed; or the spiritual meaning of some emblem or type. In both these senses it is rendered sacramentum in the Vulgate translation, which shows that the latter word was formerly used in a large signification. As the Greek term was employed in the New Testament to express the hidden meaning of an external

symbol, as in Revelation 1:20, "the mystery of the seven stars," it was naturally applied by early Christians to the symbolical rite of the Lord's Supper; and as some of the most sacred and retired parts of the ancient heathen worship were called mysteries, from which all but the initiated were excluded, the use of the same term to designate that most sacred act of Christian worship, which was strictly confined to the approved members of the Church, was probably thought peculiarly

appropriate. The Latin word sacramentum, in its largest sense, may signify a sacred ceremony; and is the appellation, also, of the military oath of fidelity taken by the Roman soldiers. For both these reasons, probably, the term sacrament was adopted by the Latin Christians. For the first, because of the peculiar sacredness of the Lord's Supper; and for the second, because of that engagement to be faithful to the commands of Christ, their heavenly Leader, which was implied in this ordinance, and impressed

upon them by so sacred a solemnity.

It was, perhaps, from the designation of this ordinance, by the term sacramentum, by the Christians whom Pliny examined as to their faith and modes of worship, that he thus expresses himself in his letter to the Emperor Trajan:- "From their affirmations I learned that the sum of all their offence, call it fault or error, was, that on a day fixed they used to assemble before sunrise, and sing together, in alternate responses,

hymns to Christ, as a Deity; binding themselves by the solemn engagements of an oath, not to commit any manner of wickedness,"

&c. - The term sacrament was also at an early period given to baptism, as well as to the Supper of the Lord, and is now confined among Protestants to these two ordinances only. The distinction between sacraments, and other religious rites, is well stated by Burnet. (On the Articles.)

"This difference is to be put between sacraments and

other ritual actions; that whereas other rites are badges and distinctions by which Christians are known, a sacrament is more than a bare matter of form; as in the Old Testament, circumcision and propitiatory sacrifices were things of a different nature and order from all the other ritual precepts concerning their cleansings, the distinctions of days, places, and meats These were, indeed, precepts given them of God; but they were not federal acts of renewing the covenant, or reconciling

themselves to God. By circumcision they received the seal of the covenant, and were brought under the obligation of the whole law; they were made by it debtors to it; and when by their sins they had provoked God's wrath, they were reconciled to him by their sacrifices, with which atonement was made, and so their sins were forgiven them; the nature and end of those was, to be federal acts, in the offering of which the Jews kept to their part of the covenant, and in the accepting of which God maintained it

on his part; so we see a plain difference between these and a mere rite, which though commanded, yet must pass only for the badge of a profession, as the doing of it is an act of obedience to a Divine law. Now in the new dispensation, though our Savior has eased us of that law of ordinances, that grievous yoke, and those beggarly elements, which were laid upon the Jews; yet since we are still in the body subject to our senses, and to sensible things, he has appointed some federal actions to be both the

visible stipulations and professions of our Christianity, and the conveyancers to us of the blessings of the Gospel."

It is this view of the two sacraments, as federal acts, which sweeps away the five superstitious additions that the temerity of the Church of Rome has dared to elevate to the same rank of sacredness and importance.

As it is usual among men to confirm covenants by visible and solemn forms, and has been so from the most ancient times, so

when almighty God was pleased to enter into covenant engagements with men, he condescended to the same methods of affording, on his part, sensible assurances of his fidelity, and to require the same from them. Thus, circumcision was the sign and seal of the covenant with Abraham; and when the great covenant of grace was made in the Son of God with all nations, it was agreeable to this analogy to expect that he would institute some constantly-recurring visible sign, in confirmation of his mercy

to us, which should encourage our reliance upon his promises, and have the force of a perpetual renewal of the covenant between the parties. Such is manifestly the character and ends both of the institution of baptism and the Lord's Supper; but as to the five additional sacraments of the Church of Rome,

"they have not any visible sign or ceremony ordained of God/' (Article 25th of the Church of England,) and they stand in no direct connection with any

covenant engagement entered into by him with his creatures. Confirmation rests on no Scriptural authority at all. Penance, if it mean any thing more than repentance, is equally unsanctioned by Scripture; and if it mean "repentance toward God," it is no more a sacrament than faith. Orders, or the ordination of ministers, is an apostolic command, but has in it no greater indication of a sacramental act than any other such command, - say the excommunication of obstinate sinners from the Church, which with just as

good a reason might be elevated into a sacrament. Marriage appears to have been made by the papists a sacrament for this curious reason, that the Apostle Paul, when speaking of the love and union of husband and wife, and taking occasion from that to allude to the love of Christ to his Church, says, "This is a great mystery," which the Vulgate version translates, "sacramentum hoc magnum est:" thus they confound the large and the restricted sense of the word sacrament, and forget that the true "mystery" spoken

of by the apostle, lies not in marriage, but in the union of Christ with his people, - "This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the Church." If, however, the use of the word "mystery" in this passage by St. Paul, were sufficient to prove marriage a sacrament, then the calling of the Gentiles, as Beza observes, might be the eighth sacrament, since St. Paul terms that "a mystery," Eph. 1:9, which the Vulgate, in like manner translates by "sacramentum" The last of their sacraments is extreme

unction, of which it is enough to say that it is nowhere prescribed in Scripture; and if it were, has clearly nothing in it of a sacramental character. The passage in St. James's Epistle to which they refer, cannot serve them at all; for the Romanists use extreme unction only when all hope of recovery is past, whereas the prayers and the anointing mentioned by St. James were resorted to in order to a miraculous cure, for life, and not for death. With them, therefore, extreme unction

is called "the sacrament of the dying."

Of the nature of sacraments there are three leading views.

The first is that taken by the Church of Rome.

According to the doctrine of this Church, the sacraments contain the grace they signify, and confer grace, ex opere operato, by the work itself, upon such as do not put an obstruction by mortal sin. "For these sensible and natural things," it is declared, "work by the

almighty power of God in the sacraments what they could not do by their own power." Nor is any more necessary to this effect, than that the priests, "who make and consecrate the sacraments, have an intention of doing what the Church doth, and doth intend to do." (Cone. Trid. Can. 11.) According therefore to this doctrine, the matter of the sacrament derives from the action of the priest, in pronouncing certain words, a. Divine virtue, provided it be the intention of the priest to give to that matter

such a Divine virtue, and this grace is conveyed to the soul of every person who receives it. Nor is it required of the person receiving a sacrament, that he should exercise any good disposition, or possess faith; for such is conceived to be the physical virtue of a sacrament, that, except when opposed by the obstacle of a mortal sin, the act of receiving it is alone sufficient for the experience of its efficacy. This is so capital an article of faith with the Romish Church, that the council of

Trent anathematizes all who deny that grace is not conferred by the sacraments from the act itself of receiving them, and affirm that faith only in the Divine promises is sufficient to the obtaining of grace, - "Se quis dixerit, per ipsa nova legis sacramenta, ex opere operato, non conferri gratiam, sed solum fidem divinae promissionis ad gratiam conse quendam sufficere, anathema sit." (Conc. Trid. Sess. vii, Can. 8.) It is on this ground also, that the members of that Church argue the

superiority of the sacraments of the New Testament to those of the Old; the latter having been effectual only ex opere operantis, from the piety and faith of the persons receiving them, while the former confer grace ex opere operate, from their own intrinsic virtue, and an immediate physical influence upon the mind of the receiver.

The first great objection to this statement is, that it has even no pretence of authority from Scripture, and grounds itself wholly

upon the alleged traditions of the Church of Rome, which, in fact, are just what successive inventors of superstitious practices have thought proper to make them. The second is, that it is decidedly anti-scriptural; for as the only true notion of a sacrament is, that it is the sign and seal of a covenant; and as the saving benefits of the covenant of grace are made expressly to depend upon a true faith; the condition of grace being made by the Church of Rome the act of receiving a sacrament independent of true faith,

she impudently rejects the great Condition of salvation as laid down in God's word, and sets up in its place another of an opposite kind by mere human authority. The third is, that it debases an ordinance of God from a rational service into a mere charm, disconnected with every mental exercise, and working its effect physically, and not morally. The fourth is its licentious tendency; for as a very large class of sins is by the Romish Church allowed to be venial, and nothing but a mortal sin can prevent

the recipient of the sacrament from receiving the grace of God; men may live in the practice of all these venial offences, and consequently in an unrenewed habit of soul, and yet be assured of the Divine favor, and of eternal salvation; thus again boldly contradicting the whole tenor of the New Testament. - Finally, whatever privileges the sacraments are designed to confer, all of them are made by this doctrine to depend, not upon the state of the receiver's mind, but upon the

"intention" of the administrator, who, if not intending to impart the physical virtue to the elements, renders the sacrament of no avail to the recipient, although he performs all the external acts of the ceremony.

The opposite opinion of this gross and unholy doctrine is that maintained by Socinus, and adopted generally by his followers: to which also the notions of some orthodox Protestants have too carelessly leaned. The view taken on the subject of the sacraments

by such persons is, that they differ not essentially from other rites and ceremonies of religion; but that their peculiarity consists in their emblematic character, under which they represent what is spiritual and invisible, and are memorials of past events. Their sole use therefore is to cherish pious sentiments, by leading the mind to such meditations as are adapted to excite them. Some also add, that they are the badges of a Christian profession, and the instituted means by

which Christians testify their faith in Christ.

The fault of the popish opinion is superstitious excess; the fault of the latter scheme is that of defect. The sacraments are emblematical; they are adapted to excite pious sentiments; they are memorials, at least the Lord's Supper bears this character; they are badges of profession; they are the appointed means for declaring our faith in Christ; and so far is this view superior to the popish doctrine, that it elevates

the sacraments from the base and degrading character of a charm and incantation, to that of a spiritual and reasonable service, and instead of making them substitutes for faith and good works, renders them subservient to both.

But if the sacraments are federal rites, that is, if they are covenant transactions, they must have a more extensive and a deeper import than this view of the subject conveys. If circumcision was "a token," and a "seal" of the covenant

by which God engaged to justify men by faith, then, as we shall subsequently show, since Christian baptism came in its place, it has precisely the same office; if the passover was a sign, a pledge or seal, and subsequently a memorial, then these characters will belong to the Lord's Supper; the relation of which to the "New Testament," or covenant, "in the blood" of our Savior, is expressly stated by himself. What is the import of the terms sign and seal will be hereafter considered; but it is

enough here to suggest them, to show that the second opinion above stated loses sight of these peculiarities, and is therefore defective.

The third opinion may be stated in the words of the formularies of several Protestant Churches.

The Heidelberg Catechism has the following question and reply:-

"What are the sacraments?"

"They are holy visible signs and seals, ordained by God for this end, that he may

more fully declare and seal by them the promise of his Gospel unto us; to wit, that not only unto all believers in general, but unto each of them in particular, he freely giveth remission of sins and life eternal, upon the account of that only sacrifice of Christ, which he accomplished upon the cross."

The Church of England, in her Twenty-fifth Article, thus expresses herself:-

"Sacraments ordained of Christ be not only badges or tokens of Christian men's profession, but

rather they be sure witnesses, and effectual signs of grace, and God's will toward us, by the which he doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our faith in him."

The Church of Scotland, in the one hundred and sixty-second Question of her Larger Catechism, asks,

"What is a sacrament?" and replies:-

"A sacrament is a holy ordinance, instituted by Christ in his Church, to

signify, seal, and exhibit, unto those within the covenant of grace, the benefits of his mediation; to strengthen and increase their faith, and all other graces; to oblige them to obedience; to testify and cherish their love and communion one with another; and to distinguish them from those that are without."

In all these descriptions of a sacrament, terms are employed of just and weighty meaning, which will subsequently require notice. Generally, it may,

however, here be observed, that they all assume that there is in this ordinance an express institution of God; that there is this essential difference between them and every other symbolical ceremony, that they are seals as well as signs, that is, that they afford pledges on the part of God of grace and salvation; that as a covenant has two parties, our external acts in receiving the sacraments are indications of certain states and dispositions of our mind with regard to God's covenant, without

which none can have a personal participation in its benefits, and so the sacrament is useless where these are not found; that there are words of institution; and a promise also by which the sign and the thing signified are connected together.

The covenant of which they are the seals, is that called by the Heidelberg Catechism, "the promise of the Gospel;" the import of which is, that God giveth freely to every one that believeth remission of sins, with all spiritual blessings,

and "life eternal, upon the account of that only sacrifice of Christ which he accomplished upon the cross."

As signs, they are visible and symbolical expositions of what the Article of the Church of England, above quoted, calls "the grace of God," and his "will," that is, his "good will toward us;" or, according to the Church of Scotland, "significations of the benefits of his mediation;"

that is, they exhibit to the senses, under appropriate emblems, the same

benefits as are exhibited in another form in the doctrines and promises of the word of God, so that "the eye may affect and instruct the heart," and that for the strong incitement of our faith, our desire, and our gratitude. It ought nevertheless to be remembered that they are not signs merely of the grace of God to us, but of our obligations to him; obligations, however, still flowing from the same grace.

They are also seals. A seal is a confirming sign, or,

according to theological language, there is in a sacrament a signum significans, and a signum confirmans; the former of which is said, significare, to notify or to declare; the latter obsignare, to set one's seal to, to witness. As, therefore, the sacraments, when considered as signs, contain a declaration of the same doctrines and promises which the written word of God exhibits, but addressed by a significant emblem to the senses; so also as seals, or pledges, they confirm the same promises which are

assured to us by God's own truth and faithfulness in his word, (which is the main ground of all affiance in his mercy,) and by his indwelling Spirit by which we are "sealed," and have in our hearts "the earnest" of our heavenly inheritance. This is done by an external and visible institution; so that God has added these ordinances to the promises of his word, not only to bring his merciful purpose toward us in Christ to mind, but constantly to assure us that those who believe in him shall be and are made

partakers of his grace. These ordinances are a pledge to them, that Christ and his benefits are theirs, while they are required, at the same time, by faith, as well as by the visible sign, to signify their compliance with his covenant, which may be called "setting to their seal." "The sacraments are God's seals, as they are ordinances given by him for the confirmation of our faith that he would be our covenant God; and they are our seals, or we set our seal thereunto, when we visibly profess that we give up

ourselves to him to be his people, and, in the exercise of a true faith, look to be partakers of the benefits which Christ hath purchased, according to the terms of the covenant." (Dr. Ridgley.)

The passage quoted from the Heidelberg Catechism has a clause which is of great importance in explaining the design of the sacraments. They are "visible signs and seals ordained by God for this end, that he may more fully declare, and seal by them the promise of his Gospel

unto us, to wit, that not only unto all believers in general, but to each of them in particular, he freely giveth remission of sins and life eternal, upon the account of that only sacrifice of Christ, which he accomplished upon the cross." For it is to be remarked that the administration is to particular individuals separately, both in baptism and the Lord's Supper, - "Take, eat," "drink ye all of this;" so that the institution of the sign and seal of the covenant, and the acceptance of this sign and

seal is a solemn transaction between God and each individual. From which it follows, that to every one to whom the sign is exhibited, a seal and pledge of the invisible grace is also given; and every individual who draws near with a true heart and full assurance of faith, does in his own person enter into God's covenant, and to him in particular that covenant stands firm. He renews it also in every sacramental act, the repetition of which is appointed, and being authorized by a Divine and standing institution thus to

put in his claim to the full grace of the covenant, he receives thereby continual assurances of the love and faithfulness of a God who changes not; but exhibits the same signs and pledges of the same covenant of grace, to the constant acceptance of every individual believer throughout all the ages of his Church, which is charged with the ministration of these sacred symbols of his mercy to mankind. This is an important and most encouraging circumstance.

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56 THE INSTITUTIONS OF THE CHURCH - BAPTISM

The obligation of baptism rests upon the example of our Lord, who, by his disciples, baptized many that by his discourses and miracles were brought to profess faith in him as the Messias;-

upon his solemn command to his apostles after his resurrection, "Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father,

and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," Matt. 28:19.

And upon the practice of the apostles themselves, who thus showed that they did not understand baptism, like our Quakers, in a mystical sense. Thus St. Peter, in his sermon upon the day of pentecost, exhorts, "Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the Holy Ghost," Acts 2:38.

As to this sacrament, which has occasioned endless and various controversies,

three things require examination, - its NATURE; its SUBJECTS; and its mode.

I. its nature. The Romanists, agreeably to their superstitious opinion as to the efficacy of sacraments, consider baptism administered by a priest having a good intention, as of itself applying the merits of Christ to the person baptized. According to them, baptism is absolutely necessary to salvation, and they therefore admit its validity when administered

to a dying child by any person present, should there be no priest at hand. From this view of its efficacy arises their distinction between sins committed before and after baptism. The hereditary corruption of our nature, and all actual sins committed before baptism, are said to be entirely removed by it; so that if the most abandoned person were to receive it for the first time in the article of death, all his sins would be washed away. But all sins committed after baptism, and the infusion of that

grace which is conveyed by the sacrament, must be expiated by penance. In this notion of regeneration, or the washing away of original sin by baptism, the Roman Church followed Augustine; but as he was a predestinarian, he was obliged to invent a distinction between those who are regenerated, and those who are predestinated to eternal life; so that, according to him, although all the baptized are freed from that corruption which is entailed upon mankind by Adam's lapse, and

experience a renovation of mind, none continue to walk in that state but the predestinated. The Lutheran Church also places the efficacy of this sacrament in regeneration, by which faith is actually conveyed to the soul of an infant. The Church of England in her baptismal services has not departed entirely from the terms used by the Romish Church from which she separated. She speaks of those who are by nature "born in sin," being made by baptism "the children of grace," which are, however, words

of equivocal import; and she gives thanks to God

"that it hath pleased him to regenerate this infant with his Holy Spirit," probably using the term regeneration in the same-large sense as several of the ancient fathers, and not in its modern theological interpretation, which is more strict. However this be, a controversy has long existed in the English Church as to the real opinion of her founders on this point; one part of the clergy holding the doctrine of baptismal regeneration,

and the absolute necessity of baptism unto salvation; the other taking different views not only of the doctrine of Scripture, but also of the import of various expressions found in the articles, catechisms, and offices of the Church itself.

The Quakers view baptism only as spiritual, and thus reject the rite altogether, as one of the

"beggarly elements" of former dispensations; while the Socinians regard it as a mere mode of professing the religion of

Christ. Some of them indeed consider it as calculated to produce a moral effect upon those who submit to it, or who witness its administration; while others think it so entirely a ceremony of induction into the society of Christians from Judaism and paganism, as to be necessary only when such conversions take place, so that it might be wholly laid aside in Christian nations.

We have called baptism a federal transaction; an initiation into, and acceptance of, the covenant

of grace, required of us by Christ as a visible expression and act of that faith in him which he has made a condition of that salvation. It is a point, however, of so much importance to establish the covenant character of this ordinance, and so much of the controversy as to the proper subjects of baptism depends upon it, that we may consider it somewhat at large.

That the covenant with Abraham, of which circumcision was made the sign and seal, Gen. 27:7,

was the general covenant of grace, and not wholly, or even chiefly, a political and national covenant, may be satisfactorily established.

The first engagement in it was, that God would "greatly bless" Abraham; which promise, although it comprehended temporal blessings, referred, as we learn from St. Paul, more fully to the blessing of his justification by the imputation of his faith for righteousness, with all the spiritual advantages consequent upon the relation which was thus

established between him and God, in time and eternity. The second promise in the covenant was, that he should be "the father of many nations," which we are also taught by St. Paul to interpret more with reference to his spiritual seed, the followers of that faith whereof cometh justification, than to his natural descendants. "That the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to that which is by the law, but to that also which is by the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all" - of all believing Gentiles as

well as Jews. The third stipulation in God's covenant with the patriarch, was the gift of Abraham and to his seed of "the land of Canaan," in which the temporal promise was manifestly but the type of the higher promise of a heavenly inheritance. Hence St. Paul says, "By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise;" but this "faith" did not respect the fulfillment of the temporal promise; for St. Paul adds,

"they looked for a city which had foundations, whose builder and maker is God," Heb. 11:19. The next promise was, that God would always be "a God to Abraham and to his seed after him," a promise which is connected with the highest spiritual blessings, such as the remission of sins, and the sanctification of our nature, as well as with a visible Church state. It is even used to express the felicitous state of the Church in heaven, Rev.

21:3. The final engagement in the Abrahamic covenant, was that in Abraham's "seed, all the nations of the earth should be blessed;" and this blessing, we are expressly taught by St. Paul, was nothing less than the justification of all nations, that is, of all believers in all nations, by faith in Christ:- "And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen by faith, preached before the Gospel to Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they who are of faith, are blessed with

believing Abraham," they receive the same blessing, justification, by the same means, faith, Gal. 3:8, 9.

This covenant with Abraham, therefore, although it respected a natural seed, Isaac, from whom a numerous progeny was to spring; and an earthly inheritance provided for this issue, the land of Canaan; and a special covenant relation with the descendants of Isaac, through the line of Jacob, to whom Jehovah was to be "a God," visibly and specially, and they a

visible and "peculiar people;" yet was, under all these temporal, earthly, and external advantages, but a higher and spiritual grace embodying itself under these circumstances, as types of a dispensation of salvation and eternal life, to all who should follow the faith of Abraham, whose justification before God was the pattern of the justification of every man, whether Jew or Gentile, in all ages.

Now, of this covenant, in its spiritual as well as in its

temporal provisions, circumcision was most certainly the sacrament, that is, the "sign" and the "seal;" for St. Paul thus explains the case:

"And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised." And as this right was enjoined upon Abraham's posterity, so that every "uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin was not circumcised on the eighth day," was to be "cut off from his people," by the

special judgment of God, and that because "he had broken God's covenant" Gen. 17:14, it therefore follows that this rite was a constant publication of God's covenant of grace among the descendants of Abraham, and its repetition a continual confirmation of that covenant, on the part of God, to all practicing it in that faith of which it was the ostensible expression.

As the covenant of grace made with Abraham was bound up with temporal promises and privileges, so circumcision was a sign

and seal of the covenant in both its parts, - its spiritual and its temporal, its superior and inferior, provisions. The spiritual promises of the covenant continued unrestricted to all the descendants of Abraham, whether by Isaac or by Ishmael; and still lower down, to the descendants of Esau as well as to those of Jacob. Circumcision was practiced among them all by virtue of its Divine institution at first; and was extended to their foreign servants, and to proselytes, as well as to their children; and

wherever the sign of the covenant of grace was by Divine appointment, there it was as a seal of that covenant, to all who believingly used it; for we read of no restriction of its spiritual blessings, that is, its saving engagements, to one line of descent from Abraham only. But over the temporal branch of the covenant, and the external religious privileges arising out of it, God exercised a rightful sovereignty, and expressly restricted them first to the line of Isaac, and then to that of Jacob, with whose descendants he

entered into special covenant by the ministry of Moses. The temporal blessings and external privileges comprised under general expressions in the covenant with Abraham, were explain-ed and enlarged under that of Moses, while the spiritual blessings remained unrestricted as before. This was probably the reason why circumcision was re-enacted under the law of Moses. It was a confirmation of the temporal blessings of the Abrahamic covenant, now, by a covenant of

peculiarity, made over to them, while it was still recognized as a consuetudinary rite which had descended to them from their fathers, and as the sign and seal of the covenant of grace, made with Abraham and with all his descendants without exception. This double reference of circumcision, both to the authority of Moses and to that of the patriarchs, is found in the words of our Lord, John 7:22: "Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision, not because it is of Moses, but of the

fathers;" or, as it is better translated by Campbell, "Moses instituted circumcision among you, (not that it is from Moses, but from the patriarchs,) and ye circumcise on the Sabbath. If on the Sabbath a child receive circumcision, that the law of Moses may not be violated," &c.

From these observations, the controversy in the apostolic Churches respecting circumcision will derive much elucidation.

The covenant with Abraham prescribed circumcision as an act of faith in its promises, and a pledge [to perform its conditions] [on the part of his descendants.] But the object on which this faith rested, was "the seed of Abraham," in whom the nations of the earth were to be blessed: which seed, says St. Paul, "is Christ;" - Christ as promised, not yet come. When the Christ had come, so as fully to enter upon his redeeming offices, he could no longer be the object of faith, as still to come; and this leading

promise of the covenant being accomplished, the sign and seal of it vanished away. Nor could circumcision be continued in this view, by any, without an implied denial that Jesus was the Christ, the expected seed of Abraham. Circumcision also as an institution of Moses, who continued it as the sign and seal of the Abrahamic covenant both in its spiritual and temporal provisions, but with respect to the latter made it also the sign and seal of the restriction of its temporal blessings and

peculiar religious privileges to the descendants of Israel, was terminated by the entrance of our Lord upon his office of Mediator, in which office all nations were to be blessed in him. The Mosaic edition of the covenant not only guaranteed the land of Canaan, but the peculiarity of the Israelites, as the people and visible Church of God to the exclusion of others, except by proselytism. But when our Lord commanded the Gospel to be preached to "all nations," and opened the gates of the "common

salvation" to all, whether Gentiles or Jews, circumcision, as the sign of a covenant of peculiarity and religious distinction, was done away also. It had not only no reason remaining, but the continuance of the rite involved the recognition of exclusive privileges which had been terminated by Christ.

This will explain the views of the Apostle Paul on this great question. He declares that in Christ there is neither circumcision nor uncircumcision; that

neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but "faith that worketh by love;" faith in the seed of Abraham already come and already engaged in his mediatorial and redeeming work; faith, by virtue of which the Gentiles came into the Church of Christ on the same terms as the Jews themselves, and were justified and saved. The doctrine of the non-necessity of circumcision he applies to the Jews as well as to the Gentiles, although he specially resists the attempts of the

Judaizers to impose this rite upon the Gentile converts; in which he was supported by the decision of the Holy Spirit when the appeal upon this question was made to "the apostles and elders at Jerusalem," from the Church at Antioch. At the same time it is clear that he takes two different views of the practice of circumcision, as it was continued among many of the first Christians. The first is that strong one which is expressed in Gal. 5:2-4, "Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be

circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing; for I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law, ye are fallen from grace." The second is that milder view which he himself must have had when he circumcised Timothy to render him more acceptable to the Jews; and which also appears to have led him to abstain from all allusion to this practice when writing his epistle to the believing

Hebrews, although many, perhaps most of them, continued to circumcise their children, as did the Jewish Christians for a long time afterward. These different views of circumcision, held by the same person, may be explained by considering the different principles on which circumcision might be practiced after it had become an obsolete ordinance.

1. It might be taken in the simple view of its first institution, as the sign and seal of the Abrahamic

covenant; and then it was to be condemned as involving a denial that Abraham's seed, the Christ, had already come, since, upon his coming, every old covenant gave place to the new covenant introduced by him.

2. It might be practiced and enjoined as the sign and seal of the Mosaic covenant, which was still the Abrahamic covenant with its spiritual blessings, but with restriction of its temporal promises and special ecclesiastical privileges to the line of

Jacob, with a law of observances which was obligatory upon all entering that covenant by circumcision. In that case it involved, in like manner, the notion of the continuance of an old covenant, after the establishment of the new; for thus St. Paul states the case in Gal. iii, 19, "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions until the seed should come." After that therefore it had no effect:- it had waxed old, and had vanished away.

3. Again: Circumcision might imply an obligation to observe all the ceremonial usages and the moral precepts of the Mosaic law, along with a general belief in the mission of Christ, as necessary to justification before God. This appears to have been the view of those among the Galatian Christians who submitted to circumcision, and of the Jewish teachers who enjoined it upon them; for St. Paul in that epistle constantly joins circumcision with legal observances, and as

involving an obligation to do "the whole law," in order to justification. "I testify again to every man that is circumcised that he is a debtor to do the whole LAW; whosoever of you are justified by the law, ye are fallen from grace." "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ," Gal. 2:16. To all persons therefore practicing circumcision in this view, it was obvious that "Christ was become of none effect," the very principle of justification by faith alone

in him was renounced, even while his Divine mission was still admitted.

4. But there are two grounds on which circumcision may be conceived to have been innocently, though not wisely, practiced among the Christian Jews. The first was that of preserving an ancient national distinction on which they valued themselves; and were a converted Jew in the present day disposed to perform that rite upon his children for this purpose only, renouncing in the act

all consideration of it as a sign and seal of the old covenants, or as obliging to ceremonial acts in order to justification, no one would censure him with severity. It appears clear that it was under some such view that St. Paul circumcised Timothy, whose mother was a Jewess; he did it because of "the Jews which were in those quarters," that is, because of their national prejudices,

"for they knew that his father was a Greek." The second was a lingering notion, that, even in the

Christian Church, the Jews who believed would still retain some degree of eminence, some superior relation to God; a notion which, however unfounded, was not one which demanded direct rebuke, when it did not proudly refuse spiritual communion with the converted Gentiles, but was held by men who "rejoiced that God had granted to the Gentiles repentance unto life."

These considerations may account for the silence of St. Paul on the subject of

circumcision in his Epistle to the Hebrews. Some of them continued to practice that rite, but they were probably believers of the class just mentioned; for had he thought that the rite was continued among them on any principle which affected the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, he would no doubt have been equally prompt and fearless in pointing out that apostasy from Christ which was implied in it, as when he wrote to the Galatians.

Not only might circumcision be practiced

with views so opposite that one might be wholly innocent, although an infirmity of prejudice; the other such as would involve a rejection of the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ; but some other Jewish observances also stood in the same circumstances. St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Galatians, a part, of his writings from which we obtain the most information on these questions, grounds his "doubts" whether the members of that Church were not seeking to be "justified by the law," upon

their observing "days, and months, and times, and years." Had he done more than "doubt," he would have expressed himself more positively. He saw their danger on this point; he saw that they were taking steps to this fatal result, by such an observance of these "days," &c, as had a strong leaning and dangerous approach to that dependence upon them for justification, which would destroy their faith in Christ's solely sufficient sacrifice; but his very doubting, not of the fact of their being addicted

to these observances, but of the animus with which they regarded them, supposes it possible, however dangerous this Jewish conformity might be, that they might be observed for reasons which would still consist with their entire reliance upon the merits of Christ for salvation. Even he himself, strongly as he resisted the imposition of this conformity to Jewish customs upon the converts to Christianity as a matter of necessity, yet in practice must have conformed to many of them, when no sacrifice of principle was

understood; for, in order to gain the Jews, he became "as a Jew."

From these observations, which have been somewhat digressive, we return to observe that not only was the Abrahamic covenant, of which circumcision was the sign and seal, a covenant of grace, but that when this covenant in its ancient form was done away in Christ, then the old sign and seal peculiar to that form was by consequence abolished. If then baptism be not the initiatory sign and seal of the same

covenant in its new and perfect form, as circumcision was of the old, this new covenant has no such initiatory rite or sacrament at all; since the Lord's Supper is not initiatory, but, like the sacrifices of old, is of regular and habitual observance. Several passages of Scripture, and the very nature of the ordinance of baptism, will, however, show that baptism is to the new covenant what circumcision was to the old, and took its place by the appointment of Christ.

This may be argued from our Lord's commission to his apostles, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you," Matt. 28:19, 20. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," Mark 16:15,16.

To understand the force of these words of our Lord, it

must be observed, that the gate of "the common salvation" was only now for the first time going to be opened to the Gentile nations. He himself had declared that in his personal ministry he was not sent but to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel;" and he had restricted his disciples in like manner, not only from ministering to the Gentiles, but from entering any city of the Samaritans. By what means therefore were "all nations" now to be brought into the Church of God, which from henceforth was

most truly to be catholic or universal? Plainly, by baptizing them that believed the "good news," and accepted the terms of the new covenant. This is apparent from the very words; and thus was baptism expressly made the initiatory rite, by which believers of "all nations" were to be introduced into the Church and covenant of grace; an office in which it manifestly took the place of circumcision, which heretofore, even from the time of Abraham, had been the only initiatory rite into the same covenant. Moses

re-enacted circumcision; our Lord not only does not re-enact it, but, on the contrary, he appoints another mode of entrance into the covenant in its new and perfected form, and that so expressly as to amount to a formal abrogation of the ancient sign, and the putting of baptism in its place. The same argument may be maintained from the words of our Lord to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." By the kingdom of God, our Lord,

no doubt, in the highest sense, means the future state of felicity; but he uses this phrase to express the state of his Church on earth, which is the gate to that celestial kingdom; and generally indeed speaks of his Church on earth under this mode of expression, rather than of the heavenly state. If then he declares that no one can "enter" into that Church but by being "born of water and of the Holy Spirit," which heavenly gift followed upon baptism when received in true faith, he clearly makes baptism the mode of

initiation into his Church in this passage as in the last quoted; and in both he assigns to it the same office as circumcision in the Church of the Old Testament, whether in its patriarchal or Mosaic form.

A farther proof that baptism has precisely the same federal and initiatory character as circumcision, and that it was instituted for the same ends, and in its place, is found in Colossians 2:10-12, "And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power; in

whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, buried with him in baptism" &c. Here baptism is also made the initiatory rite of the new dispensation, that by which the Colossians were joined to Christ in whom they are said to be "complete;" and so certain is it that baptism has the same office and import now as circumcision formerly, - with this difference only, that the object of faith was

then future, and now it is Christ as come, - that the apostle expressly calls baptism

"the circumcision of, Christ" the circumcision instituted by him, which phrase he puts out of the reach of frivolous criticism, by adding exegetically, - "buried with him in baptism." For unless the apostle here calls baptism "the circumcision of Christ," he asserts that we "put off the body of the sins of the flesh," that is, become new creatures by virtue of our Lord's own

personal circumcision; but if this be absurd, then the only reason for which he can call baptism "the circumcision of Christ," or Christian circumcision, is, that it has taken the place of the Abrahamic circumcision, and fulfils the same office of introducing believing men into God's covenant, and entitling them to the enjoyment of spiritual blessings.

But let us also quote Gal. 3:27-29, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on

Christ; there is neither Jew nor Gentile, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus; and if ye are Christ's," by thus being

"baptized" and by "putting on" Christ," then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

The argument here is also decisive. It cannot be denied that it was by circumcision believingly submitted to, that "strangers" or heathens, as well as Jews, became the spiritual "seed of

Abraham," and "heirs" of the same spiritual and heavenly "promises." But the same office in this passage is ascribed to baptism also believingly submitted to; and the conclusion is therefore inevitable. The same covenant character of each rite is here also strongly marked, as well as that the covenant is the same, although under a different mode of administration. In no other way could circumcision avail any thing under the Abrahamic covenant, than as it was that visible act by which

God's covenant to justify men by faith in the promised seed was accepted by them. It was therefore a part of a federal transaction; that outward act which he who offered a covenant engagement so gracious required as a solemn declaration of the acceptance of the covenanted grace upon the covenanted conditions. It was thus that the Abrahamic covenant was offered to the acceptance of all who heard it, and thus that they were to declare their acceptance of it. In the same manner there is a

standing offer of the same covenant of mercy wherever the Gospel is preached. The "good news" which it contains is that of a promise, an engagement, a covenant on the part of God to remit sin, and to save all that believe in Christ. To the covenant in this new form he also requires a visible and formal act of acceptance, which act when expressive of the required faith makes us parties to the covenant, and entitles us through the faithfulness of God to its benefits. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be

saved;" or, as in the passage before us,

"As many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ; and if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

We have the same view of baptism as an act of covenant acceptance, and as it relates to God's gracious engagement to justify the ungodly by faith in his Son, in the often-quoted passage in 1

Peter 3:20, "Which sometime were

disobedient, when once the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure where-unto even baptism doth also now save us, (not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

When St. Peter calls baptism the "figure," antitupon, the antitype of the transaction by which

Noah and his family v/ere saved from perishing with the ungodly and unbelieving world, he had doubtless in mind the faith of Noah, and that under the same view as the Apostle Paul, in Heb.

11: "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which "act of faith" he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith;" an expression of the

same import as if he had said,

"by which act of faith he was justified before God." It has been already explained in another place (Part 2, chap. 22,) in what way Noah's preparing of the ark, and his faith in the Divine promise of preservation, were indicative of his having that direct faith in the Christ to come, of which the Apostle Paul discourses in the eleventh of the Hebrews, as that which characterized

"all the elders," and by which they obtained their "good report" in the Church. His preservation and that of his family was so involved in the fulfillment of the more ancient promise respecting the seed of the woman, and the deliverance of man from the power of Satan, that we are warranted to conclude that his faith in the promise respecting his own deliverance from the deluge, was supported by his faith in that greater promise, which must have fallen to the ground had the whole race perished

without exception. His building of the ark, and entering into it with his family, are therefore considered by St. Paul as the visible expression of his faith in the ancient promises of God respecting Messiah; and for this reason baptism is called by St. Peter, without any allegory at all, but in the sobriety of fact "the antitype" of this transaction; the one exactly answering to the other, as an external expression of faith in the same objects and the same promises.

But the apostle does not rest in this general representation. He proceeds to express in a particular and most forcible manner, the nature of Christian baptism, - "not the putting away of the filth of the flesh; but the answer of a good conscience toward God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

Now, whether we take the word eperotema, rendered in our translation "answer," for a demand or requirement; or for the answer to a question or

questions; or in the sense of stipulation; the general import of the passage is nearly the same. If the first, then the meaning of the apostle is, that baptism is not the putting away the filth of the flesh, not a mere external ceremony; but a rite which demands or requires something of us, in order to the attainment of a "good conscience."

What that is, we learn from the words of our Lord: it is faith in Christ: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved;" which faith is the reliance of a penitent

upon the atonement of the Savior, who thus submits with all gratitude and truth to the terms of the evangelical covenant. If we take the second sense, we must lay aside the notion of some lexicographers and commentators, who think that there is an allusion to the ancient practice of demanding of the candidates for baptism whether they renounced their sins, and the service of Satan, with other questions of the same import; for ancient as these questions may be, they are probably not so ancient as

the time of the apostle. We know, however, from the instance of Philip and the eunuch, that there was an explicit requirement of faith, and as explicit an answer or confession:

"And Philip said, if thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest; and he answered, I believe that Jesus is the Soil of God." Every administration of baptism indeed implied this demand; and baptism, if we understand St. Peter to refer to this circumstance, was such an "answer" to the

interrogations of the administrator, as expressed a true and evangelical faith. If we take the third rendering of "stipulation" which has less to support it critically than either of the others, still as the profession of faith was a condition of baptism, that profession had the full force of a formal stipulation, since all true faith in Christ requires an entire subjection to him as Lord, as well as Savior.

Upon this passage, however, a somewhat clearer light may be

thrown, by understanding the word eperotema in the sense of that which asks, requires, seeks, something beyond itself. The verb from which it is derived signifies to ask or require; but eperotema occurs nowhere else in the New Testament; and but once in the version of the Seventy, Dan. 4:17, where, however, it is used so as to be fully illustrative of the meaning of St. Peter. Nebuchadnezzar was to be humbled by being driven from men to associate with the beasts of the field; and the vision in which this was

represented concludes, "This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand, to eperotema, by the word of the Holy Ones, to the intent that the living may know, ina gnosin oi zontes, that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men." The Chaldaic word, like the Greek, is from a word which signifies to ask, to require, and may be equally expressed by the word petitio, which is the rendering of the Vulgate, or by postulatum. There was an end, an "intent," for which the humbling of the

Babylonian king was required "by the word of the Holy Ones" that, by the signal punishment of the greatest earthly monarch, "the living might know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men." In like manner baptism has an end, an "intent," "not the putting away the filth of the flesh," but obtaining "a good conscience toward God;" and it requires, claims this good conscience through that faith in Christ whereof cometh remission of sins, the cleansing of the "conscience from dead works," and those supplies

of supernatural aid by which, in future, men may "live in all good conscience before God." It is thus that we see how St. Peter preserves the correspondence between the act of Noah in preparing the ark as an act of faith by which he was justified, and the act of submitting to Christian baptism, which is also obviously an act of faith, in order to the remission of sins, or the obtaining a good conscience before God.

This is farther strengthened by his immediately adding, "by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:" a clause which our translators by the use of a parenthesis, connect with "baptism doth also now save us;" so that their meaning is, we are saved by baptism through the resurrection of Jesus Christ; and as he "rose again for our justification," this sufficiently shows the true sense of the apostle, who, by our being "saved," clearly means our being justified by faith.

The text, however, needs no parenthesis, and the true sense may be thus expressed: "The antitype to which water of the flood, baptism, doth now save us; not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but that which intently seeks a good conscience toward God, through faith in the resurrection of Jesus Christ." But however a particular word may be disposed of, the whole passage can only be consistently taken to teach us that baptism is the outward sign of our entrance into God's

covenant of mercy; and that when it is an act of true faith, it becomes an instrument of salvation, like that act of faith in Noah, by which, when moved with fear, he

"prepared an ark to the saving of his house," and survived the destruction of an unbelieving world.

From what has been said it will then follow, that the Abrahamic covenant and the Christian covenant is the same gracious engagement on the part of God to show mercy to man, and to bestow upon him

eternal life, through faith in Christ as the true sacrifice for sin, differing only in circumstances; and that as the sign and seal of this covenant under the old dispensation was circumcision, under the new it is baptism, which has the same federal character, performs the same initiatory office, and is instituted by the same authority. For none could have authority to lay aside the appointed seal, but the being' who first instituted it, who changed the form of the covenant itself, and who has in fact abrogated

the old seal by the appointment of another, even baptism, which is made obligatory upon "all nations to whom the Gospel is preached, and is" to continue to "the end of the world."

This argument is sufficiently extended to show that the Antipaedobaptist writers have in vain endeavored to prove that baptism has not been appointed in the room of circumcision; a point on which, indeed, they were bound to employ all their strength; for the substitution of baptism for

circumcision being established, one of their main objections to infant baptism, as we shall just now show, is rendered wholly nugatory.

But it is not enough, in stating the nature of the ordinance of Christian baptism, to consider it generally as an act by which man enters into God's covenant of grace. Under this general view several particulars are contained, which it is of great importance rightly to understand. Baptism, both as a sign and seal, presents

an entire correspondence with the ancient rite of circumcision.

Let it then be considered,-

1. As a sign. Under this view, circumcision indicated, by a visible and continued rite, the placability of God toward his sinful creatures, and held out the promise of justification, by faith alone, to every truly penitent offender. It went farther, and was the sign of sanctification, or the taking away the pollution of sin, "the superfluity of naughtiness," as well as the

pardon of actual offences, and thus was the visible emblem of a regenerate mind, and a renewed life. This will appear from the following passages: "For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly in the flesh; but he is a Jew which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God," Rom. 2:28. "And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest

live," Deut. 30:6. "Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the foreskins of your heart, ye men of Judah, and inhabitants of Jerusalem," Jer. 4:3. It was the sign also of peculiar relation to God, as his people: "Only the Lord had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day. Circumcise, therefore, the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiff necked," Deut. 10:15, 16.

In all these respects, baptism, as a sign of the new covenant, corresponds to circumcision. Like that, its administration is a constant exhibition of the placability of God to man; like that, it is the initiatory rite into a covenant which promises pardon and salvation to a true faith, of which it is the outward profession; like that, it is the symbol of regeneration, the washing away of sin, and

"the renewing of the Holy Ghost;" and like that, it is a sign of peculiar relation to

God, Christians becoming, in consequence, "a chosen generation, a peculiar people," - his "Church" on earth, as distinguished from "the world." "For we," says the apostle, "are the circumcision," we are that peculiar people and Church now, which was formerly distinguished by the sign of circumcision,

"who worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

But as a sign baptism is more than circumcision; because the covenant,

under its new dispensation, was not only to offer pardon upon believing, deliverance from the bondage of fleshly appetites, and a peculiar spiritual relation to God, all which we find under the Old Testament; but also to bestow the Holy Spirit, in his fulness, upon all believers; and of this effusion of "the power from on high," baptism was made the visible sign; and perhaps for this, among some other obvious reasons, was substituted for circumcision, because baptism by effusion, or

pouring, (the New Testament mode of baptizing, as we shall afterward show,) was a natural symbol of this heavenly gift. The baptism of John had special reference to the Holy Spirit, which was not to be administered by him, but by Christ, who should come after him. This gift only honoured John's baptism once, in the extraordinary case of our Lord; but it constantly followed upon the baptism administered by the apostles of Christ, after his ascension, and "the sending of the promise

of the Father." Then Peter said unto them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" Acts 2:17.

"According to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed" or poured out, "on us abundantly through Jesus Christ." For this reason Christianity is called "the ministration of the Spirit;" and so far is this from being confined to the

miraculous gifts often bestowed in the first age of the Church, that it is made the standing and prominent test of true Christianity to "be led by the Spirit," - "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Of this great new covenant blessing, baptism was therefore eminently the sign; and it represented "the pouring out" of the Spirit, "the descending"

of the Spirit, the "falling" of the Spirit "upon men," by the mode in which it was administered, the pouring

of water from above upon the subjects baptized.

As a seal also, or confirming sign, baptism answers to circumcision. By the institution of the latter, a pledge was constantly given by the Almighty to bestow the spiritual blessings of which the rite was the sign, pardon and sanctification through faith in the future seed of Abraham; peculiar relation to Him as "his people;" and the heavenly inheritance. Of the same blessings, baptism is also the pledge, along with that

higher dispensation of the Holy Spirit which it specially represents in emblem. Thus in baptism there is on the part of God a visible assurance of his faithfulness to his covenant stipulations. But it is our seal also; it is that act by which we make ourselves parties to the covenant, and thus "set to our seal, that God is true." In this respect it binds us, as, in the other, God mercifully binds himself for the stronger assurance of cur faith.

We pledge ourselves to trust wholly in Christ for pardon and salvation, and to obey his laws:-

"teaching them (to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you:" in that rite also we undergo a mystical death unto sin, a mystical separation from the world, which St. Paul calls being "buried with Christ in or by baptism;" and a mystical resurrection to newness of life, through Christ's resurrection from the dead. Thus in circumcision, an obligation of faith in the promises

made to Abraham, and an obligation to holiness of life, and to the observance of the Divine laws, was contracted; and Moses, therefore, in a passage above quoted, argues from that peculiar visible relation of the Israelites to God, produced by outward circumcision, to the duty of circumcising the heart: "The Lord had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all people; circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart,"

Deut. 10:15. If then we bring all these considerations under one view, we shall find it sufficiently established that baptism is the sign and seal of the covenant of grace under its perfected dispensation;- that it is the grand initiatory act by which we enter into this covenant, in order to claim all its spiritual blessings, and to take upon ourselves all its obligations;- that it was appointed by Jesus Christ in a manner which plainly put it in the place of circumcision;- that it is now the means by which

men become Abraham's spiritual children, and heirs with him of the promise, which was the office of circumcision, until "the seed," the Messiah, should come;- and that baptism is therefore expressly called by St. Paul, "the circumcision of Christ," or Christian circumcision, in a sense which can only import that baptism has now taken the place of the Abrahamic rite.

The only objection of any plausibility which has been urged by Antipaedobaptist writers against the

substitution of baptism for circumcision, is thus stated by Mr. Booth: "If baptism succeeded in the place of circumcision, how came it that both of them were in full force at the same time, that is, from the commencement of John's ministry to the death of Christ? For one thing to come in the room of another, and the latter to hold its place, is an odd kind of succession. Admitting the succession pretended, how came it that Paul circumcised Timothy, after he had been baptized?" That

circumcision was practiced along with baptism from John the Baptist's ministry to the death of Christ may be very readily granted, without affecting the question; for baptism could not be made the sign and seal of the perfected covenant of grace, until that covenant was both perfected, and fully explained and proposed for acceptance, which did not take place until after "the blood of the everlasting covenant" was shed, and our Lord had opened its full import to the apostles who were to publish it "to

all nations" after his resurrection. Accordingly we find that baptism was formally made the rite of initiation into this covenant for the first time, when our Lord gave commission to his disciples to "go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," - "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." John's baptism was upon profession of repentance, and faith in the speedy appearance of Him who was to baptize with the

Holy Ghost, and fire; and our Lord's baptism by his disciples was administered to those Jews that believed on him, as the Messias, all of whom, like the apostles, waited for a fuller development of his character and offices. For since the new covenant was not then fully perfected, it could not be proposed in any other way than to prepare them that believed in Christ, by its partial but increasing manifestation in the discourses of our Lord, for the full declaration both of its benefits and obligations; which

declaration was not made until after his resurrection. Whatever the nature and intent of that baptism which our Lord by his disciples administered, might be, (a point on which we have no information,) like that of John, it looked to something yet to come, and was not certainly that baptism in the name "of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," which was afterward instituted as the standing initiatory rite into the Christian Church. As for the circumcision of Timothy, and the practice of that rite among many of

the Hebrew believers, it has already been accounted for. If indeed the Baptist writers could show that the apostles sanctioned the practice of circumcision as a seal of the old covenant, either as it was Abrahamic or Mosaic, or both, then there would be some force in the argument, that one could not succeed the other, if both were continued under inspired authority.

But we have the most decided testimony of the Apostle Paul against any such use of circumcision:

and he makes it, when practiced in that view, a total abnegation of Christ and the new covenant. It follows then, that, when circumcision was continued by any connivance of the apostles, - and certainly they did no more than connive at it, - it was practiced upon some grounds which did not regard it as the seal of any covenant, from national custom, or prejudice, a feeling to which the Apostle Paul himself yielded in the case of Timothy. He circumcised him, but not from any conviction of

necessity, since he uniformly declared circumcision to have vanished away with that dispensation of the covenant of which it was the seal through the bringing in of a better hope.

We may here add, that an early father, Justin Martyr, takes the same view of the substitution of circumcision by Christian baptism: "We, Gentiles," Justin observes, "have not received that circumcision according to the flesh, but that which is spiritual-and

moreover, for indeed we were sinners, we have received this in baptism, through God's mercy, and it is enjoined on all to receive it in like manner."

II. The nature of baptism having been thus explained, we may proceed to consider its SUBJECTS.

That believers are the proper subjects of baptism, as they were of circumcision, is beyond dispute. As it would have been a monstrous perversion of circumcision to have administered it to any person, being of adult

age, who did not believe in the true and living God, and in the expected "seed of Abraham," in whom all nations were to be blessed; so is faith in Christ also an indispensable condition for baptism in all persons of mature age; and no minister is at liberty to take from the candidate the visible pledge of his acceptance of the terms of God's covenant, unless he has been first taught its nature, promises, and obligations, and gives sufficient evidence of the reality of his faith, and the sincerity of his profession

of obedience. Hence the administration of baptism was placed by our Lord only in the hands of those who were "to preach the Gospel," that is, of those who were to declare God's method of saving men "through faith in Christ," and to teach them "to observe all things, whatsoever Christ had commanded them." Circumcision was connected with teaching, and belief of the truth taught; and so also is Christian baptism.

The question, however, which now requires consideration is, whether the infant children of believing parents are entitled to be made parties to the covenant of grace, by the act of their parents, and the administration of baptism?

In favor of infant baptism, the following arguments may be adduced. Some of them are more direct than others; but the reader will judge whether, taken all together, they do not establish this practice of the Church, continued to

us from the earliest ages, upon the strongest basis of scriptural authority.

1. As it has been established, that baptism was put by our Lord himself and his apostles in the room of circumcision, as an initiatory rite into the covenant of grace; and as the infant children of believers under the Old Testament were entitled to the covenant benefits of the latter ordinance, and the children of Christian believers are not expressly excluded from entering into the same covenant by

baptism; the absence of such an explicit exclusion is sufficient proof of their title to baptism.

For if the covenant be the same in all its spiritual blessings, and an express change was made by our Lord in the sign and seal of that covenant, but no change at all in the subjects of it, no one can have a right to carry that change farther than the Lawgiver himself, and to exclude the children of believers from entering his covenant by baptism, when they had always been entitled to

enter into it by circumcision. This is a censurable interference with the authority of God; a presumptuous attempt to fashion the new dispensation in this respect so as to conform it to a mere human opinion of fitness and propriety. For to say, that because baptism is directed to be administered to believers when adults are spoken of, it follows that children who are not capable of personal faith are excluded from baptism, is only to argue in the same manner as if it were contended, that,

because circumcision, when adults were the subjects, was only to be administered to believers, therefore infants were excluded from that ordinance, which is contrary to the fact. This argument will not certainly exclude them from baptism by way of inference, and by no act of the Maker and Mediator of the covenant are they shut out.

2. If it had been intended to exclude infants from entering into the new covenant by baptism, the absence of every

prohibitory expression to this effect in the New Testament, must have been misleading to all men; and especially to the Jewish believers.

Baptism was no new ordinance when our Lord instituted it, though he gave to it a particular designation. It was in his practice to adapt, in several instances, what he found already established, to the uses of his religion. "A parable, for instance, was a Jewish mode of teaching.

- Who taught by parables equal to Jesus Christ? And

what is the most distinguished and appropriate rite of his religion, but a service grafted on a passover custom among the Jews of his day? It was not ordained by Moses, that a part of the bread they had used in the passover should be the last thing they ate after that supper; yet this our Lord took as he found it, and converted it into a memorial of his body. The 'cup of blessing' has no authority whatever from the original institution; yet this our Lord found in use, and adopted as a memorial

of his blood:- taken together, these elements form one commemoration of his death. Probability, arising to rational certainty, therefore, would lead us to infer, that whatever rite Jesus appointed as the ordinance of admission into the community of his followers, he would also adopt from some service already existing-from some token familiar among the people of his nation.

"In fact, we know that ' divers baptizing existed under the law, and we have

every reason to believe, that the admission of proselytes into the profession of Judaism, was really and truly marked by a washing with water in a ritual and ceremonial manner. I have always understood that Maimonides is perfectly correct when he says, 'In all ages, when a heathen (or a stranger by nation) was willing to enter into the covenant of Israel, and gather himself under the wings of the majesty of God, and take upon himself the yoke of the law-he must be first circumcised, and

secondly baptized, and thirdly, bring a sacrifice: or if the party were a woman, then she must be first baptized, and secondly bring a sacrificed He adds, 'At this present time when (the temple being destroyed) there is no sacrificing, a stranger must be first circumcised, and secondly baptized.'

"Dr. Gill, indeed, in his Dissertation on Jewish Proselyte Baptism, has ventured the assertion, that ' there is no mention made of any rite or custom of admitting Jewish

proselytes by baptism, in any writings or records before the time of John the Baptist, Christ and his apostles; nor in any age after them, for the first three or four hundred years; or, however, before the writing of the Talmuds,' But the learned doctor has not condescended to understand the evidence of this fact. It does not rest on the testimony of Jewish records solely: it was in circulation among the heathen, as we learn from the clear and demonstrative testimony of Epictetus, who has these

words: (he is blaming those who assume the profession of philosophy without acting up to it: Why do you call yourself a Stoic? Why do you deceive the multitude? Why do you pretend to be a Greek when you are a Jew? a Syrian? an Egyptian? And when we see any one wavering, we are wont to say, This is not a Jew, but acts one. But when he assumes the sentiments of one who hath been baptized and circumcised, then he both really is, and is called a jew. Thus we, falsifying our profession, are Jews in

name, but in reality something else.'

"This practice then of the Jews, - proselyte baptism- was so notorious to the heathen in Italy and in Greece, that it furnished this philosopher with an object of comparison. Now, Epictetus lived to be very old: he is placed by Dr. Lardner, A. D. 109, by Le Clerc, A. D. 104. He could not be less than sixty years of age when he wrote this; and he might obtain his information thirty or forty years earlier, which brings it up to the time of the

apostles. Those who could think that the Jews could institute proselyte baptism at the very moment when the Christians were practicing baptism as an initiatory rite, are not to be envied for the correctness of their judgment. The rite certainly dates much earlier, probably many ages. I see no reason for disputing the assertion of Maimonides, notwithstanding Dr. Gill's rash and fallacious language on the subject." (Facts and Evidences on the Subject of Baptism.)

This baptism of proselytes, as Lightfoot has fully showed, was a baptism of families, and comprehended their infant children; and the rite was a symbol of their being washed from the pollution of idolatry. Very different indeed in the extent of its import and office was Christian baptism to the Jewish baptisms, nevertheless, this shows that the Jews were familiar with the rite as it extended to children, in cases of conversions from idolatry; and, as far at least as the converts from paganism to

Christianity were concerned, they could not but understand Christian baptism to extend to the infant children of Gentile proselytes, unless there had been, what we nowhere find in the discourses of Christ and the writings of the apostles, an express exception of them.- In like manner, their own practice of infant circumcision must have misled them; for if they were taught that baptism was the initiatory seal of the Christian covenant, and had taken the place of circumcision, which St.

Paul had informed them was "a seal of the righteousness which is by faith," how should they have understood that their children were no longer to be taken into covenant with God, as under their own former religion, unless they had been told that this exclusion of children from all covenant relation to God, was one of those peculiarities of the Christian dispensation in which it differed from the religion of the patriarchs and Moses? This was surely a great change; a change which must have made

great impression upon a serious and affectionate Jewish parent, who could now no longer covenant with God for his children, or place his children in a special covenant relation to the Lord of the whole earth; a change indeed so great, - a placing of the children of Christian parents in so inferior, and, so to speak, outcast a condition in comparison of the children of believing Jews, while the Abrahamic covenant remained in force, - that not only, in order to prevent mistake, did it require an express

enunciation, but in the nature of the thing it must have given rise to so many objections, or at least inquiries, that explanations of the reason of this peculiarity might naturally be expected to occur in the writings of the apostles, and especially in those of St. Paul. On the contrary, the very phraseology of these inspired men, when touching the subject of the children of believers only incidentally, was calculated to confirm the ancient practice, in opposition to what we are told is the true doctrine of the Gospel

upon this point. For instance: how could the Jews have understood the words of Peter at the pentecost, but as calling both upon them and their children, to be baptized? - "Repent and be baptized, for the promise is unto you and to your children." For that both are included, may be proved, says a sensible writer, by considering,

"1. The resemblance between this promise, and that in Gen. 17:7, 'To be a God unto thee, and unto thy seed after thee.' The resemblance between these

two lies in two things: (1.) Each stands connected with an ordinance, by which persons were to be admitted into Church fellowship; the one by circumcision, the other by baptism. (2.) Both agree in phraseology; the one is, ' to thee and thy seed;' the other is, 'to you and your children.' Now, every one knows that the word seed means children; and that children means seed; and that they are precisely the same. From these two strongly resembling features, viz. their connection with a similar

ordinance, and the sameness of the phraseology, I infer, that the subjects expressed in each are the very same. And as it is certain that parents and infants were intended by the one; it must be equally certain that both are intended by the other.

"2. The sense in which the speaker must have understood the sentence in question: ' The promise is to you, and to your children.' In order to know this, we must consider who the speaker was, and from

what source he received his religious knowledge. The apostle was a Jew. He knew that he himself had been admitted in infancy, and that it was the ordinary practice of the Church to admit infants to membership. Arid he likewise knew, that in this they acted on the authority of that place, where God promises to Abraham, 'to be a God unto him, and unto his seed.' Now, if the apostle knew all this, in what sense could he understand the term children, as distinguished from their parents? I have

said that tekna, children, and speiro, seed, mean the same thing. And as the apostle well knew that the term seed intended infants, though not mere infants only; and that infants were circumcised and received into the Church as being the seed, what else could he understand by the term children, when mentioned with their parents? Those who will have the apostle to mean, by the term children 'adult posterity' only, have this infelicity attending them, that they understand the term differently from all other men; and

they attribute to the apostle a sense of the word which to him must have been the most forced and unfamiliar.

"3. In what sense his hearers must have understood him, when he said, ' the promise is to you, and to your children.'

"The context informs us, that many of St. Peter's hearers, as he himself was, were Jews. They had been accustomed for many hundred years to receive infants by circumcision into the Church; and this they did, as before

observed, because God had promised to be a God to Abraham and to his seed. They had understood this promise to mean parents and their infant offspring, and this idea was become familiar by the practice of many centuries. What then must have been their views, when one of their own community says to them, ' the promise is to you and to your children? If their practice of receiving infants was founded on a promise exactly similar, as it was, how could they possibly understand him, but as meaning the same thing,

since he himself used the same mode of speech? This must have been the case, unless we admit this absurdity, that they understood him in a sense to which they had never been accustomed.

"How idle a thing it is, in a Baptist, to come with a lexicon in his hand, to inform us that tekna, children, means posterity! Certainly it does, and so includes the youngest infants.

"But the Baptists will have it, that tekna, children, in this place, means only

adult posterity. And if so, the Jews to whom he spoke, unless they understood St. Peter in a way in which it was morally impossible they should, would infallibly have understood him wrong. Certainly, all men, when acting freely, will understand words in that way which is most familiar to them; and nothing could be more so to the Jews, than to understand such a speech as Peter's to mean adults and infants.

"We should more certainly come at the truth, if,

instead of idly criticizing, we could fancy ourselves Jews, and in the habit of circumcising infants, and receiving them into the Church; and then could we imagine one of our own nation and religion to address us in the very language of Peter in this text, 'The promise is to you and to your children;' let us ask ourselves whether we could ever suppose him to mean adult posterity only!" (Edwards on Baptism.) To this we may add that St. Paul calls the children of believers holy, separated to God, and standing

therefore in a peculiar relation to him. 1 Cor. 7:14; a mode of speech which would also have been wholly unintelligible at least to a Jew, unless by some rite of Christianity children were made sharers in its covenanted mercies.

The practice of the Jews, and the very language of the apostles, so naturally leading therefore to a misunderstanding of this sacrament, if infant baptism be not a Christian rite, and that in respect of its subjects themselves, it was the more necessary

that some notice of the exclusion of infants from the Christian covenant should have been given by way of guard. And as we find no intimation of this prohibitory kind, we may confidently conclude that it was never the design of Christ to restrict this ordinance to adults only.

3. Infant children are declared by christ to be members of his Church.

That they were made members of God's Church in the family of Abraham, and among the Jews, cannot be denied. They

were made so by circumcision, which was not that carnal and merely political rite which many Baptist writers in contradiction to the Scriptures make it, but was, as we have seen, the seal of a spiritual covenant, comprehending engagements to bestow the remission of sins and all its consequent blessings in this life, and, in another, the heavenly Canaan. Among these blessings was that special relation, which consisted in becoming a visible and peculiar people of God, his church. This

was contained in that engagement of the covenant,

"I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people;" a promise, which, however connected with temporal advantages, was, in its highest and most emphatic sense, wholly spiritual. Circumcision was therefore a religious, and not a mere political rite, because the covenant, of which it was the seal, was in its most ample sense spiritual. If therefore we had no direct authority from the words of Christ to

declare the infant children of believers competent to become the members of his Church, the two circumstances, - that the Church of God, which has always been one Church in all ages, and into which the Gentiles are now introduced, formerly admitted infants to membership by circumcision, - and that the mode of initiation into it only has been changed, and not the subjects, (of which we have no intimation,) would themselves prove that baptism admits into the Christian Church both

believing parents and their children, as circumcision admitted both. The same Church remains; for "the olive tree" is not destroyed; the natural branches only are broken off, and the Gentiles grafted in, and "partake of the root and fatness of the olive tree," that is, of all the spiritual blessings and privileges heretofore enjoyed by the Jews, in consequence of their relation to God as his Church. But among these spiritual privileges and blessings, was the right of placing their children in c ovenant with God; the

membership of the Jews comprehended both children and adults; and the grafting in of the Gentiles, so as to partake of the same "root and fatness," will therefore include a right to put their children also into the covenant, so that they as well as adults may become members of Christ's Church, have God to be "their God," and be acknowledged by him, in the special sense of the terms of the covenant, to be his "people."

But we have our Lord's direct testimony to this point, and that in two remarkable passages, Luke 9:47, 48, "And Jesus took a child and set him by him, and he said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this child in my name, receiveth me; and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth him that sent me; for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great." We grant that this is an instance of teaching by parabolic action. The intention of Christ was to impress the necessity of humility and

teachableness upon his disciples, and to afford a promise, to those who should receive them in his name, of that special grace which was implied in receiving himself. But then, were there not a correspondence of circumstances between the child taken by Jesus in his arms, and the disciples compared to this child, there would be no force, no propriety, in the action, and the same truth might have been as forcibly stated without any action of this kind at all. Let then these correspondences be

remarked in order to estimate the amount of their meaning. The humility and docility of the true disciple corresponded with the same dispositions in a young child; and the "receiving a disciple in the name" of Christ corresponds with the receiving of a child in the name of Christ, which can only mean the receiving of each with kindness, on account of a religious relation between each and Christ, which religious relation can only be well interpreted of a Church relation. This is farther

confirmed by the next point of correspondence, the identity of Christ both with the disciple and the child, "Whosoever shall receive this child in my name receiveth me;" but such an identity of Christ with his disciple stands wholly upon their relation to him as members of his mystical "body, the Church." It is in this respect only that they are "one with him;" and there can be no identity of Christ with "little children" but by virtue of the same relation, that is, as they are members of his mystical

body, the Church; of which membership, baptism is now, as circumcision was then, the initiatory rite. That was the relation in which the very child he then took up in his arms stood to him by virtue of its circumcision; it was a member of his Old Testament Church; but, as he is speaking of the disciples as the future teachers of his perfected covenant, and their reception in his name under that character, he manifestly glances at the Church relationship of children to him to be

established by the baptism to be instituted in his perfect dispensation.

This is, however, expressed still more explicitly in Mark 10:14, "But when Jesus saw it he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God:- and he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them." Here the children spoken of are "little children," of so tender an age, that our Lord "took them up in his

arms." The purpose for which they were brought was not, as some of the Baptist writers would suggest, that Christ should heal them of diseases; for though St. Mark says, "They brought young children to Christ that he might touch them," this is explained by St. Matthew, who says, - that he should put his hands upon them, and pray;" and even in the statement of St. Mark 10:16, it is not said that our Lord healed them, but "put his hands upon them, and blessed them;" which clearly enough shows that

this was the purpose for which they were brought by their parents to Christ. Nor is there any evidence that it was the practice among the Jews, for common unofficial persons to put their hands upon the heads of those for whom they prayed. The parents here appear to have been among those who believed Christ to be a prophet, "that Prophet" or the Messias; and on that account earnestly desired his prayers for their children, and his official blessing upon them. That official blessing, - the blessing

which he was authorized and empowered to bestow by virtue of his Messiahship, - he was so ready, we might say so anxious, to bestow upon them, that he was "much displeased"

with his disciples who "rebuked them that brought them," and gave a command which was to be in force in all future time, - "Suffer the little children to come unto me," in order to receive my official blessing: "for of such is the kingdom of God." The first evasive criticism of the Baptist

writers is, that the phrase "of such," means of such like, that is, of adults being of a child-like disposition; a criticism which takes away all meaning from the words of our Lord. For what kind of reason was it to offer for permitting children to come to Christ to receive his blessing, that persons not children, but who were of a child-like disposition, were the subjects of the kingdom of God? The absurdity of this is its own refutation, since the reason for children being permitted to come, must be found in

themselves, and not in others. The second attempt to evade the argument from this passage is, to understand "the kingdom of God," or "the kingdom of heaven,"

as St. Matthew has it, exclusively of the heavenly state. We gladly admit, in opposition to the Calvinistic Baptists, that all children, dying before actual sin committed, are admitted into heaven through the merits of Christ; but for this very reason it follows that infants are proper subjects

to be introduced into his Church on earth. The phrases, "the kingdom of God." and "the kingdom of heaven," are, however, more frequently used by our Lord to denote the Church in this present world, than in its state of glory: and since all the children brought to Christ to receive his blessing were not likely to die in their infancy, it could not be affirmed, that "of such is the kingdom of heaven," if that be understood to mean the state of future happiness exclusively. As children, they might all be

members of the Church on earth; but not all as children, members of the Church in heaven, seeing they might live to become adult, and be cast away. Thus, therefore, if children are expressly declared to be members of Christ's Church, then are they proper subjects of baptism, which is the initiatory rite into every portion of that Church which is visible.

But let this case be more particularly considered.

Take it that by "the kingdom of God," or "of heaven," our Lord means

the glorified state of his Church; it must be granted that none can enter into heaven who are not redeemed by Christ, and who do not stand in a vital relation to him as members of his mystical body, or otherwise we should place human and fallen beings in that heavenly state who are unconnected with Christ as their Redeemer, and uncleansed by him as the sanctifier of his redeemed. Now, this relation must exist on earth, before it can exist in heaven; or else we assign the work of sanctifying the fallen

nature of man to a future state, which is contrary to the Scriptures. If infants, therefore, are thus redeemed and sanctified in their nature, and are before death made "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light;" so that in this world they are placed in the same relation to Christ as an adult believer, who derives sanctifying influence from him, they are therefore the members of his Church, - they partake the grace of the covenant, and are comprehended in that promise of the covenant, "I will be to them a God, and

they shall be to me a people." In other words, they are made members of Christ's Church, and are entitled to be recognized as such by the administration of the visible sign of initiation into some visible branch of it. If it be asked, "Of what import then is baptism to children, if as infants they already stand in a favorable relation to Christ?" the answer is, that it is of the same import as circumcision was to Abraham, which was

"a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had

yet being uncircumcised:" it confirmed all the promises of the covenant of grace to him, and made the Church of God visible to men. It is of the same import as baptism to the eunuch, who had faith already, and a willingness to submit to the rite before it was administered to him. He stood at that moment in the condition, not of a candidate for introduction into the Church, but of an accepted candidate; he was virtually a member, although not formally so, and his baptism was not merely a sign of his faith,

but a confirming sign of God's covenant relation to him as a pardoned and accepted man, and gave him a security for the continuance and increase of the grace of the covenant, as he was prepared to receive it. In like manner, in the case of all truly believing adults applying for baptism, their relation to Christ is not that of mere candidates for membership with his Church, but that of accepted candidates, standing already in a vital relation to him, but about to receive the seal which

was to confirm that grace, and its increase in the ordinance itself, and in future time. Thus this previous relation of infants to Christ, as accepted by him, is an argument for their baptism, not against it, seeing it is by that they are visibly recognized as the formal members of his Church, and have the full grace of the covenant confirmed and sealed to them, with increase of grace as they are fitted to receive it, beside the advantage of visible connection with the Church, and of that

obligation which is taken upon themselves by their parents to train them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

In both views then, "of such is the kingdom of God," - members of his Church on earth, and of his Church in heaven, if they die in infancy, for the one is necessarily involved in the other. No one can be of the kingdom of God in heaven, who does not stand in a vital sanctifying relation to Christ as the head of his mystical body, the Church, on earth; and

no one can be of the kingdom of God on earth, a member of his true Church, and die in that relation, without entering that state of glory to which his adoption on earth makes him an heir, through Christ.

4. The argument from apostolic practice next offers itself. That practice was to baptize the houses of them that believed.

The impugners of infant baptism are pleased to argue much from the absence of all express mention of the baptism of

infants in the New Testament. This however is easily accounted for, when it is considered that if, as we have proved, baptism took the place of circumcision, the baptism of infants was so much a matter of course, as to call for no remark. The argument from silence on this subject is one which least of all the Baptists ought to dwell upon, since, as we have seen, if it had been intended to exclude children from the privilege of being placed in covenant with God, which privilege they unquestionably

enjoyed under the Old Testament, this extraordinary alteration, which could not but produce remark, required to be particularly noted, both to account for it to the mind of an affectionate Jewish parent, and to guard against that mistake into which we shall just now show Christians from the earliest times fell since they administered baptism to infants. It may farther be observed, that, as to the Acts of the Apostles, the events narrated there did not require the express mention of the baptism of

infants, as an act separate from the baptism of adults. That which called for the administration of baptism at that period, as now, when the Gospel is preached in a heathen land, was the believing of adult persons, not the case of persons already believing, bringing their children for baptism. On the supposition that baptism was administered to the children of the parents who thus believed, at the same time as themselves, and in consequence of their believing, it may be asked how the fact could be more

naturally expressed, when it was not intended to speak of infant baptism doctrinally or distinctly', than that such a one was baptized, "and all his house;" just as a similar fact would be distinctly recorded by a modern missionary writing to a Church at home practicing infant baptism, and having no controversy on the subject in his eye, by saying that he baptized such a heathen, at such a place, with all his family. For, without going into any criticism on the Greek term rendered house, it cannot

be denied that, like the old English word employed in our translation, and also like the word family, it must be understood to comprehend either the children only, to the exclusion of the domestics, or both.

If we take the instances of the baptism of whole "houses," as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, they must be understood as marking the common mode of proceeding among the first preachers of the Gospel when the head or heads of a family believed,

or as insulated and peculiar instances. If the former, which, from what may be called the matter-of-course manner in which the cases are mentioned, is most probable, then innumerable instances must have occurred of the baptizing of houses or families, just as many in fact as there were of the conversion of heads of families in the apostolic age. That the majority of these houses must have included infant children is therefore certain, and it follows that the apostles practiced infant baptism.

But let the cases of the baptism of houses mentioned in the New Testament be put in the most favorable light for the purpose of the Baptists; that is, let them be considered as insulated and peculiar, and not instances of apostolic procedure in all cases where the heads of families were converted to the faith, still the Baptist is obliged to assume that neither in the house of the Philippian jailer, nor in that of Lydia, nor in that of Stephanas, were there any infants at all, since, if there were,

they were comprehended in the whole houses which were baptized upon the believing of their respective heads. This at least is improbable, and no intimation of this peculiarity is given in the history.

The Baptist writers, however, think that they can prove that all the persons included in these houses were adults; and that the means of showing this from the Scriptures is an instance of "the care of Providence watching over the sacred cause of adult

baptism;" thus absurdly assuming that even if this point could be made out, the whole controversy is terminated, when, in fact, this is but an auxiliary argument of very inferior importance to those above mentioned. But let us examine their supposed proofs. "With respect to the jailer," they tell us that "we are expressly assured, that the apostles spoke the word of the Lord to all that were in his house;" which we grant must principally, although not of necessity exclusively, refer to those who were of sufficient age

to understand their discourse. And "that he rejoiced, believing in God with all his house;" from which the inference is, that none but adult hearers, and adult believers, were in this case baptized. If so, then there could be no infant children in the house; which, as the jailer appears from his activity to have been a man in the vigor of life, and riot aged, is at least far from being certain. But if it be a proof in this case that there were no infant children in the jailer's family, that it is said, he believed and all his

house; this is not the only believing family mentioned in Scripture from which infants must be excluded. For, to say nothing of the houses of Lydia and Stephanas, the nobleman at Capernaum is said to have believed "and all his house"

John 4:53; so that we are to conclude that there were no infant children in this house also, although his sick son is not said to be his only offspring, and that son is called by him a child, the diminutive term paidion being used. Again,

Cornelius is said, Acts 10:2, to be "one that feared God, and all his house." Infant children therefore must be excluded from his family also; and also from that of Crispus, who is said to have "believed on the Lord with all his house;" which house appears, from what immediately follows, to have been baptized. These instances make it much more probable that the phrases "fearing God with all his house," and "believing with all his house," include young children under the believing adults, whose

religious profession they would follow, and whose sentiments they would imbibe, so that they might be called a Christian family, and that so many houses or families should have been constituted only of adult persons, to the entire exclusion of children of tender years. In the case of the jailer's house, however, the Baptist argument manifestly halts; for it is not said, that they only to whom the word of the Lord was spoken were baptized; nor that they only who "believed" and "rejoiced" with the jailer

were baptized. The account of the baptism is given in a separate verse, and in different phrase: "And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes, and was baptized, he and all his" all belonging to him, "straightway;" where there is no limitation of the persons who were baptized to the adults only by any terms which designate them as persons "hearing" or

"believing."

The next instance is that of Lydia. The words of the writer of the Acts are "Who

when she was baptized, and her house" The great difficulty with the Baptists is, to make a house for Lydia without any children at all, young or old. This, however, cannot be proved from the term itself, since the same word is that commonly used in the Scripture to include children residing at home with their parents: "One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity." It is however conjectured, first, that she had come a trading voyage, from Thyatira to Philippi,

to sell purple; as if a woman of Thyatira might not be settled in business at Philippi as a seller of this article. Then, as if to mark more strikingly the hopelessness of the attempt to torture this passage to favor an opinion, "her house" is made to consist of journeymen dyers, "employed in preparing the purple she sold;" which, however, is a notion at variance with the former; for if she was on a mere trading voyage, if she had brought her purple goods from Thyatira to Philippi to

sell, she most probably brought them ready dyed, and would have no need of a dying establishment. To complete the whole, these journeymen dyers, although not a word is said of their conversion, nor even of their existence, in the whole story, are raised into "the brethren," (a term which manifestly denotes the members of the Philippian Church,) whom Paul and Silas are said to have seen and comforted in the house of Lydia, before they departed!

All, however, that the history states is, that "the Lord opened Lydia's heart, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul," and that she was therefore "baptized and her house."

From this house no one has the least authority to exclude children, even young children, since there is nothing in the history to warrant the above-mentioned conjectures, and the word is in Scripture used expressly to include them. All is perfectly gratuitous on the

part of the Baptists; but, while there is nothing to sanction the manner in which they deal with this text, there is a circumstance strongly confirmatory of the probability that the house of Lydia, according to the natural import of the word rendered house or family, contained children, and that in an infantile state. This is, that in all the other instances in which adults are mentioned as having been baptized along with the head of a family, they are mentioned as "hearing," and "believing,"

or in some terms which amount to this. Cornelius had called together "his kinsmen and near friends;" and while Peter spake, "the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word" "and he commanded them to be baptized." So the adults in the house of the jailer at Philippi were persons to whom "the word of the Lord" was spoken; and although nothing is said of the faith of any but the jailer himself, - for the words are more properly rendered, "and he, believing in God, rejoiced

with all his house," - yet is the joy which appears to have been felt by the adult part of his house, as well as by himself to be attributed to their faith. Now, as it does not appear that the apostles, although they baptized infant children, baptized unbelieving adult servants because their masters or mistresses believed, and yet the house of Lydia were baptized along with herself, when no mention at all is made of the Lord "opening the heart" of these adult domestics, nor of their believing, the fair inference

is, that "the house" of Lydia means her children only, and that being of immature years they were baptized with their mother according to the common custom of the Jews, to baptize the children of proselyted Gentiles along with their parents, from which practice Christian baptism appears to have been taken.

The third instance is that of "the house of Stephanas," mentioned by St. Paul, 1 Cor. 1:16, as having been baptized by himself. This family also, it is argued,

must have been all adults, because they are said in the same epistle, chap. 16:15, to have "addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints," and farther, because they were persons who took "a lead" in the affairs of the Church, the Corinthians being exhorted to "submit themselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us and laboureth." To understand this passage rightly, it is how ever necessary to observe, that Stephanas, the head of this family, had been sent by the Church of Corinth to St.

Paul at Ephesus, along with Fortunatus and Achaicus. In the absence of the head of the family, the apostle commends "the house," the family of Stephanas to the regard of the Corinthian believers, and perhaps also the houses of the two other brethren who had come with him; for in several MSS. marked by Griesbach, and in some of the versions, the text reads, "Ye know the house of Stephanas and Fortunatus," and one reads also, "and of Achaicus." By the house or family of Stephanas, the apostle

must mean his children, or, along with them, his near relations dwelling together in the same family; for, since they are commended for their hospitality to the saints, servants, who have no power to show hospitality, are of course excluded. But, in the absence of the head of the family, it is very improbable that the apostle should exhort the Corinthian Church to "submit," ecclesiastically, to the wife, sons, daughters, and near relations of Stephanas, and, if the reading of

Griesbach's MSS. be followed, to the family of Fortunatus, and that of Achaicus also. In respect of government, therefore, they cannot be supposed "to have had a lead in the Church," according to the Baptist notion, and especially as the heads of these families were absent. They were however the oldest Christian families in Corinth, the house of Stephanas at least being called "the first fruits of Achaia," and eminently distinguished for

"addicting themselves," setting themselves on system, to the work of ministering to the saints, that is, of communicating to the poor saints; entertaining stranger Christians, which was an important branch of practical duty in the primitive Church, that in every place those who professed Christ might be kept out of the society of idolaters; and receiving the ministers of Christ. On these accounts the apostle commends them to the especial regard of the Corinthian Church, and

exhorts "hfna kaf humefs hupotßsseesthe tofs toio·tois, that you range yourselves under and co-operate with them, and with every one," also, "who helpeth with us, and laboureth;" the military metaphor contained in Ttaxan in the preceding verse being here carried forward. These families were the oldest Christians in Corinth; and as they were foremost in every good word and work, they were not only to be commended, but the rest were to be exhorted to serve under them as

leaders in these works of charity. This appears to be the obvious sense of this otherwise obscure passage. But in this, or indeed in any other sense which can be given to it, it proves no more than that there were adult persons in the family of Stephanas, his wife, and sons, and daughters, who were distinguished for their charity and hospitality. Still it is to be remembered, that the baptism of the oldest of the children took place several years before.

The house of Stephanas "was the first fruits of

Achaia," in which St. Paul began to preach not later than A. D. 51, while this epistle could not be written earlier at least than A. D. 57, and might be later. Six or eight years, taken from the age of the sons and daughters of Stephanas, might bring the oldest to the state of early youth, and as to the younger branches, would descend to the term of infancy, properly so called. Still farther, all that the apostle affirms of the benevolence and hospitality of the family of Stephanas is perfectly consistent with a

part of his children being still very young when he wrote the epistle. An equal commendation for hospitality and charity might be given in the present day, with perfect propriety, to many pious families, several members of which are still in a state of infancy. It was sufficient to warrant the use of such expressions as those of the apostle, that there were in these Corinthian families a few adults, whose conduct gave a decided character to the whole "house." Thus the arguments used to prove that in these three

instances of family baptism, there were no young children, are evidently very unsatisfactory; and they leave us to the conclusion, which perhaps all would come to in reading the sacred history, were they quite free from the bias of a theory, that "houses," or "families," as in the commonly received import of the term, must be understood to comprise children of all ages, unless some explicit note of the contrary appears, which is

not the case in any of the instances in question.

5. The last argument may be drawn from the antiquity of the practice of infant baptism.

If the baptism of the infant children of believers was not practiced by the apostles and by the primitive Churches, when and where did the practice commence? To this question the Baptist writers can give no answer. It is an innovation, according to them, not upon the circumstances of a sacrament, but upon its

essential principle; and yet its introduction produced no struggle; was never noticed by any general or provincial council; and excited no controversy! This itself is strong presumptive proof of its early antiquity. On the other hand, we can point out the only ancient writer who opposed infant baptism. This was Tertullian, who lived late in the second century; but his very opposition to the practice proves, that that practice was more ancient than himself; and the principles on which he

impugns it, farther show that it was so. He regarded this sacrament superstitiously; he appended to it the trine immersion in the name of each of the persons of the trinity; he gives it gravely as a reason why infants should not be baptized, that Christ says, "Suffer the little children to come unto me," therefore they must stay till they are able to come, that is, till they are grown up; "and he would prohibit the unmarried, and all in a widowed state, from baptism, because of the temptations to which

they may be liable." The whole of this is solved by adverting to that notion of the efficacy of this sacrament in taking away all previous sins, which then began to prevail, so that an inducement was held out for delaying baptism as long as possible, till at length, in many cases, it was postponed to the article of death, under the belief that the dying who received this sacrament were the more secure of salvation. Tertullian, accordingly, with all his zeal, allowed that infants ought to be

baptized if their lives be in danger, and thus evidently shows that his opposition to the baptism of infants in ordinary, rested upon a very different principle from that of the modern Antipaedobaptists.

Amidst all his arguments against this practice, Tertullian, however, never ventures upon one which would have been most to his purpose, and which might most forcibly have been urged had not baptism been administered to infants by the apostles and their immediate

successors. That argument would have been the novelty of the practice, which he never asserts, and which, as he lived so early, he might have proved, had he had any ground for it. On the contrary, Justin Martyr, and Irenaeus, in the second century, and Origen in the beginning of the third, expressly mention infant baptism as the practice of their times, and, by the latter, this is assigned to apostolic injunction. Fidus, an African bishop, applied to Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, to know, not

whether infants were to be baptized, but whether their baptism might take place before the eighth day after their birth, that being the day on which circumcision was performed by the law of Moses. This question was considered in an African synod, held A. D. 254, at which sixty-six bishops were present, and "it was unanimously decreed, 'that it was not necessary to defer baptism to that day; and that the grace of God, or baptism, should be given to all, and especially to infants.'" This decision was

communicated in a letter, from Cyprian to Fidus. (Cyp. Ep. 59.) We trace the practice also downward. In the fourth century, Ambrose says, that "infants who are baptized, are reformed from wickedness to the primitive state of their nature;" (Comment, in Lucam, c. 10;) and at the end of that century, the famous controversy took place between Augustine and Pelagius concerning original sin, in which the uniform practice of baptizing infants from the days of the apostles was admitted by both parties,

although they assigned different reasons for it. So little indeed were Tertullian's absurdities regarded, that he appears to have been quite forgotten by this time; for Augustine says he never heard of any Christian, catholic or sectary, who taught any other doctrine than that infants are to be baptized. (De Pecc.

Mor. cap. 6.) Infant baptism is not mentioned in the canons of any council; nor is it insisted upon as an object of faith in any creed; and thence

we infer that it was a point not controverted at any period of the ancient Church, and we know that it was the practice in all established Churches.

Wall says, that Peter Bruis, a Frenchman, who lived about the year 1030, whose followers were called Petrobrussians, was the first Antipaedobaptist teacher who had a regular congregation.

(Hist. part. 2, c. 7.) The Anabaptists of Germany took their rise in the beginning of the fifteenth century; but it does not

appear that there was any congregation of Anabaptists in England, till the year 1640. (Bishop Tomline's Elements.) That a practice which can be traced up to the very first periods of the Church, and has been, till within very modern times, its uncontradicted practice, should have a lower authority than apostolic usage and appointment, may be pronounced impossible. It is not like one of those trifling, though somewhat superstitious, additions, which even in very early

times began to be made to the sacraments; on the contrary, it involves a principle so important as to alter the very nature of the sacrament itself. For if personal faith be an essential requisite of baptism in all cases; if baptism be a visible declaration of this, and is vicious without it; then infant baptism was an innovation of so serious a nature, that it must have attracted attention, and provoked controversy, which would have led, if not to the suppression of the error, yet to a diversity

of practice in the ancient Churches, which in point of fact did not exist, Tertullian himself allowing infant baptism in extreme cases.

The benefits of this sacrament require to be briefly exhibited. Baptism introduces the adult believer into the covenant of grace, and the Church of Christ; and is the seal, the pledge, to him on the part of God, of the fulfillment of all its provisions, in time and in eternity; while, on his part, he takes upon himself the obligations of

steadfast faith and obedience.

To the infant child, it is a visible reception into the same covenant and Church, - a pledge of acceptance through Christ, - the bestowment of a title to all the grace of the covenant as circumstances may require, and as the mind of the child may be capable, or made capable, of receiving it; and as it may be sought in future life by prayer, when the period of reason and moral choice shall arrive. It conveys also the present "blessing" of

Christ, of which we are assured by his taking children in his arms, and blessing them; which blessing cannot be merely nominal, but must be substantial and efficacious. It secures, too, the gift of the Holy Spirit, in those secret spiritual influences, by which the actual regeneration of those children who die in infancy is effected; and which are a seed of life in those who are spared, to prepare them for instruction in the word of God, as they are taught it by parental care, to incline their will and affections to

good, and to begin and maintain in them the war against inward and outward evil, so that they may be Divinely assisted, as reason strengthens, to make their calling and election sure, In a word, it is, both as to infants and to adults, the sign and pledge of that inward grace, which, although modified in its operations by the difference of their circumstances, has respect to and flows from, a covenant relation to each of the three persons in whose one name they are baptized, - acceptance by

the father, - union with christ as the head of his mystical body, the Church, - and "the communion of the Holy Ghost." To these advantages must be added the respect which God bears to the believing act of the parents, and to their solemn prayers on the occasion, in both which the child is interested: as well as in that solemn engagement of the parents, which the right necessarily implies, to bring up their child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

To the parents it is a benefit also. It assures them that God will not only be their God; but "the God of their seed after them:" it thus gives them, as the Israelites of old, the right to covenant with God for their "little ones," and it is a consoling pledge that their dying, infant offspring shall be saved; since he who says, "Suffer little children to come unto me," has added, "for of such is the kingdom of heaven." They are reminded by it also of the necessity of acquainting themselves with God's covenant, that

they may diligently teach it to their children; and that as they have covenanted with God for their children, they are bound thereby to enforce the covenant conditions upon them as they come to years, - by example, as well as by education; by prayer, as well as by profession of the name of Christ.

III. The mode of baptism remains to be considered.

Although the manner in which the element of water is applied in baptism is but a circumstance of this sacrament, it will not be a

matter of surprise to those who reflect upon the proneness of men to attach undue importance to comparative trifles, that it has produced so much controversy. The question as to the proper subjects of baptism is one which is to be respected for its importance; that as to the mode has occupied more time, and excited greater feeling, than it is in any view entitled to. It cannot, however, be passed over, because the advocates for immersion are often very troublesome to their fellow Christians, unsettle weak

minds, and sometimes, perhaps, from their zeal for a form, endanger their own spirituality. Against the doctrine that the only legitimate mode of baptizing is by immersion, we may first observe that there are several strong presumptions.

1. It is not probable, that if immersion were the only allowable mode of baptism, it should not have been expressly enjoined.

2. It is not probable, that in a religion designed to be universal, a mode of administering this

ordinance should be obligatory, the practice of which is ill adapted to so many climates, where it would either be exceedingly harsh to immerse the candidates, male and female, strong and feeble, in water; or, in some places, as in the higher latitudes, for a greater part of the year, impossible. Even if immersion were in fact the original mode of baptizing in the name of Christ, these reasons make it improbable that no accommodation of the form should take place,

without vitiating the ordinance. This some of the stricter Baptists assert, although they themselves depart from the primitive mode of partaking of the Lord's Supper, in accommodation to the customs of their country.

3. It is still more unlikely, that in a religion of mercy there should be no consideration of health and life in the administration of an ordinance of salvation, since it is certain that in countries where cold bathing is little practiced, great risk of both is often

incurred, especially in the case of women and delicate persons of either sex, and fatal effects do sometimes occur.

4. It is also exceedingly improbable, that in such circumstances of climate, and the infrequent use of the bath, a mode of baptizing should have been appointed, which, from the shivering, the sobbing, and other bodily uneasiness produced, should distract the thoughts, and unfit the mind for a collected performance of a religious and solemn act of devotion.

5. It is highly improbable that the three thousand converts at the pentecost, who, let it be observed, were baptized on the same day, were all baptized by immersion; or that the jailer and

"all his" were baptized in the same manner in the night, although the Baptists have invented "a tank or bath in the prison at Philippi" for that purpose.

Finally, it is most of all improbable, that a religion like the Christian, so scrupulously delicate,

should have enjoined the immersion of women by men, and in the presence of men. In an after age, when immersion came into fashion, baptisteries, and rooms for women, and changes of garments, and other auxiliaries to this practice came into use, because they were found necessary to decency; but there could be no such conveniences in the first instance; and accordingly we read of none. With all the arrangements of modern times, baptism by immersion is not a decent practice; there is not a

female, perhaps, who submits to it, who has not a great previous struggle with her delicacy: but that, at a time when no such accommodations could be had as have since been found necessary, such a ceremony should have been constantly performing wherever the apostles and first preachers went, and that at pools and rivers in the presence of many spectators, and they sometimes unbelievers and scoffers, is a thing not rationally credible.

We grant that the practice of immersion is ancient, and so are many other superstitious appendages to baptism, which were adopted under the notion of making the rite more emblematical and impressive. We not only trace immersion to the second century, but immersion three times, anointing with oil, signing with the sign of the cross, imposition of hands, exorcism, eating milk and honey, putting on of white garments, all connected with baptism, and first mentioned by Tertullian;

the invention of men like himself, who with much genius and eloquence had little judgment, and were superstitious to a degree worthy of the darkest ages which followed. It was this authority for immersion which led Wall, and other writers on the side of infant baptism, to surrender the point to the Antipaedobaptists, and to conclude that immersion was the apostolic practice. Several national Churches, too, like our own, swayed by the same authority, are favorable to immersion, although they do not think

it binding, and generally practice effusion or sprinkling.

Neither Tertullian nor Cyprian was, however, so strenuous for immersion as to deny the validity of baptism by aspersion or effusion. In cases of sickness or weakness they only sprinkled water upon the face, which we suppose no modern Baptist would allow. Clinic baptism too, or the baptism of the sick in bed, by aspersion, is allowed by Cyprian to be valid; so that "if the persons recover they need

not be baptized by immersion." (Epist. 69.) Gennadius of Marseilles, in the fifth century, says that baptism was administered in the Gallic Church, in his time, indifferently by immersion or by sprinkling. In the thirteenth century, Thomas Aquinas says, "that baptism may be given, not only by immersion, but also by effusion of water or sprinkling with it." And Erasmus affirms, (Epist. 76,) that in his time it was the custom to sprinkle infants in Holland, and to dip them in England. Of

these two modes, one only was primitive and apostolic. Which that was we shall just now consider. At present it is only necessary to observe, that immersion is not the only mode which can plead antiquity in its favor; and that, as the superstition of antiquity appears to have gone most in favor of baptism by immersion, this is a circumstance which affords a strong presumption, that it was one of those additions to the ancient rite which superstition originated. This may be made out

almost to a moral certainty, without referring at all to the argument from Scripture. The "ancient Christians," the "primitive Christians," as they are called by the advocates of immersion, that is, Christians of about the age of Tertullian and Cyprian, and a little downward, - whose practice of immersion is used as an argument to prove that mode only to have had apostolic sanction, - baptized the candidates naked. Thus Wall in his History of Baptism: "The ancient Christians, when

they were baptized by immersion, were all baptized naked, whether they were men, women, or children. They thought it better represented the putting off of the old man, and also the nakedness of Christ on the cross: moreover, as baptism is a washing, they judged it should be the washing of the body, not of the clothes." This is an instance of the manner in which they affected to improve the emblematical character of the ordinance. Robinson also, in his History of Baptism, states the same

thing: "Let it be observed that the primitive Christians baptized naked. There is no ancient historical fact better authenticated than this." "They, however," says Wall, "took great care for preserving the modesty of any woman who was to be baptized. None but women came near till her body was in the water; then the priest came, and putting her head also under the water, he departed and left her to the women." Now, if antiquity be pleaded as a proof that immersion was the really primitive mode

of baptizing, it must be pleaded in favor of the gross and offensive circumstance of baptizing naked, which was considered of as much importance as the other: and then we may safely leave it for any one to say whether he really believes that the three thousand persons mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles were baptized naked? and whether when St. Paul baptized Lydia, she was put into the water naked by her women, and that the apostle then hastened "to put her head under water

also, using the form of baptism, and retired, leaving her to the women" to take her away to dress? Immersion, with all its appendages, dipping three times, nakedness, unction, the eating of milk and honey, exorcism, &c, bears manifest marks of that disposition to improve upon God's ordinances, for which even the close of the second century was remarkable, and which laid the foundation of that general corruption which so speedily followed.

But we proceed to the New Testament itself, and deny that a single clear case of baptism by immersion can be produced from it.

The word itself, as it has been often shown, proves nothing. The verb, with its derivatives, signifies to dip the hand into a dish, Matt. 26:23; to stain a vesture with blood, Rev. 19:13; to wet the body with dew, Dan. 4:33; to paint or smear the face with colors; to stain the hand by pressing a substance; to be overwhelmed in the waters as a sunken ship; to be

drowned by falling into water; to sink, in the neuter sense; to immerse totally; to plunge up to the neck; to be immersed up to the middle; to be drunken with wine; to be dyed, tinged, and imbued; to wash by effusion of water; to pour water upon the hands, or any other part of the body; to sprinkle. A word then of such large application affords a good proof for sprinkling, or partial dipping, or washing with water, as for immersion in it. The controversy on this accommodating word has been carried on to

weariness; and if even the advocates of immersion could prove, what they have not been able to do, that plunging is the primary meaning of the term, they would gain nothing, since, in Scripture, it is notoriously used to express other applications of water. The Jews had "divers baptisms" in their service; but these washings of the body in or with water, were not immersions, and in some instances they were mere sprinklings. The Pharisees "baptized before they ate," but this baptism was "the

washing of hands," which in eastern countries is done by servants pouring water over them, and not by dipping:- "Here is Elisha, the son of Shaphat, who poured water on the hands of Elijah," 2 Kings 3:11; that is, who acted as his servant. In the same manner the feet were washed: "Thou gavest me no water upon, epi, my feet," Luke 7:44.

Again, the Pharisees are said to have held the "washing" or baptism "of cups and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables;" not

certainly for the sake of cleanliness, (for all people hold the washing or baptism of such utensils for this purpose,) but from superstitious notions of purification. Now, as "sprinkling" is prescribed in the law of Moses, and was familiar to the Jews, as the mode of purification from uncleanness, as in the case of the sprinkling of the water of separation, Num.

19:19, it is for this reason much more probable that the baptism of these vessels was effected by sprinkling, than by either pouring or

immersion. But that they were not immersed, at least not the whole of them, may be easily made to appear; and if "baptism" as to any of these utensils does not signify immersion, the argument from the use of the word must be abandoned. Suppose, then, the pots, cups, and brazen vessels, to have been baptized by immersion; the "beds" or couches used to recline upon at their meals, which they ate in an accumbent posture, couches which were constructed for three or five persons each to lie

down upon, must certainly have been exempted from the operation of a "baptism" by dipping, which was probably practiced, like the

"baptism" of their hands, before every meal. The word is also used by the LXX, in Dan. 4:33, where Nebuchadnezzar is said to have been wet with the dew of heaven, which was plainly effected, not by his immersion in dew, but by its descent upon him. Finally, it occurs in 1 Cor.

10:2, "And were baptized unto Moses in the cloud

and in the sea;" where also immersion is out of the case. The Israelites were not immersed in the sea, for they went through it, "as on dry land;" and they were not immersed in the cloud, which was above them. In this case, if the spray of the sea is referred to, or the descent of rain from the cloud, they were baptized by sprinkling, or at most by pouring; and that there is an allusion to the latter circumstance, is made almost certain by a passage in the song of Deborah, and other

expressions in the Psalms, which speak of

"rain," and the "pouring out of water," and "droppings" from the "cloud" which directed the march of the Jews in the wilder, ness. Whatever, therefore, the primary meaning of the verb "to baptize" may be, is a question of no importance on one side or the other. Leaving the mode of administering baptism, as a religious rite, out of the question, it is used, generally, at least in the New Testament, not to

express immersion in water, but for the act of pouring or sprinkling it; and that baptism, when spoken of as a religious rite, is to be understood as administered by immersion, no satisfactory instance can be adduced.

The baptism of John is the first instance usually adduced in proof of this practice:- The multitudes who went out to him were "baptized of him in Jordan;" they were therefore immersed.

To say nothing here of the laborious, and apparently

impossible task imposed upon John, of plunging the multitudes, who flocked to him day by day, into the river; and the indecency of the whole proceeding when women were also concerned; it is plain that the principal object of the evangelist, in making this statement, was to point out the place where John exercised his ministry and baptized, and not to describe the mode; if the latter is at all referred to, it must be acknowledged that this was incidental to the other design. Now it so happens that we have a

passage which relates to John's baptism, and which can only be fairly interpreted by referring to his mode of baptizing, as the 'first consideration; a passage too, which John himself uttered at the very time he was baptizing "in Jordan." "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me is mightier than I: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire."

Our translators, in this passage, aware of the absurdity of translating the

preposition en, in, have properly rendered it with; but the advocates of immersion do not stumble at trifles, and boldly rush into the absurdity of Campbell's translation, "I indeed baptize you in water, he will baptize you in the Holy Ghost and fire." Unfortunately for this translation, we have not only the utter senselessness of the phrases baptized, plunged in the Holy Ghost, and plunged in fire to set against it; but also the very history of the completion of this prophetic declaration, and that not only as to the

fact that Christ did indeed baptize his disciples with the Holy Ghost and with fire, but also as to the mode in which this baptism was effected: "And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." Thus the baptism of the Holy Ghost and of fire was a descent upon, and not an immersion into. With this too agree all the accounts of the baptism of the Holy Spirit: they are all from above, like the pouring out or shedding of water upon

the head; nor is there any expression in Scripture which bears the most remote resemblance to immersing, plunging in the Holy Ghost.

When our Lord received the baptism of the Holy Ghost, "the Spirit of God descended like a dove, and lighted upon him." When Cornelius and his family received the same gift, "the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word;" "and they of the circumcision that believed were astonished, because that on the Gentiles also

was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost," which, as the words imply, had been in like manner "poured out on them." The common phrase, to

"receive" the Holy Ghost, is also inconsistent with the idea of being immersed, plunged into the Holy Ghost; and finally, when St. Paul connects the baptism with water, and the baptism with the Holy Ghost together, as in the words of John the Baptist just quoted, he expresses the mode of the baptism of the Spirit in the same

manner: "According to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Savior," Titus 3:5,6. That the mode therefore in which John baptized was by pouring water upon his disciples, may be concluded from his using the same word to express the pouring out, the descent, of the Spirit upon the disciples of Jesus. For if baptism necessarily means immersion, and John baptized by immersion, then did not

Jesus baptize his disciples with the Holy Ghost. He might bestow it upon them, but he did not baptize them with it, according to the Immersionists, since he only "poured it upon them," "shed it upon them,"

caused it "to fall upon them;" none of which, according to them, is baptism. It follows, therefore, that the prediction of John was never fulfilled, because, in their sense of baptizing, none of the disciples of Jesus mentioned in the

Acts of the Apostles ever received the Holy Ghost but by effusion. This is the dilemma into which they put them-selves. They must allow that baptism is not in this passage used for immersion; or they must deny that Jesus ever did baptize with the Holy Ghost.

To baptize "in Jordan," does not then signify to plunge in the river of Jordan. John made the neighborhood of Jordan the principal place of his ministry. Either at the fountains of some favored

district, or at some river, baptize he must because of the multitudes who came to his baptism, in a country deficient in springs, and of water in general; but there are several ways of understanding the phrase "in Jordan," which give a sufficiently good sense, and involve no contradiction to the words of John himself, who makes his baptism an effusion of water, to answer to the effusion of the Holy Spirit, as administered by Jesus. It may be taken as a note of place, not of mode. "In Jordan," therefore, the expression of St. Matthew,

is, in St. John, "in Bethabara, beyond," or situate on, "Jordan, where John was baptizing;" and this seems all that the expression was intended to mark, and is the sense to be preferred. It is thus equivalent to "at Jordan," "at Bethabara, situate on Jordan;" at being a frequent sense of τν. Or it may signify that the water of Jordan was made use of by John for baptizing, however it might be applied; for we should think it no violent mode of expression to say that we washed ourselves in a river,

although we should mean, not that we plunged ourselves into it, but merely that we took up the water in our hands, and applied it in the way of effusion. Or it may be taken to express his baptizing in the bed of the river, into which he must have descended with the baptized, in order to take up the water with his hand, or with some small vessel, as represented in ancient bas-reliefs, to pour it out upon them. This would be the position of any baptizer using a river at all accessible by a shelving

bank; and when within the bed of the stream, he might as truly be said to be in the river, when mere place was the principal thing to be pointed out, as if he had been immersed in the water. The Jordan in this respect is rather remarkable, having, according to Maundrell, an outermost bank formed by its occasional "swellings." The remark of this traveler is, "After having descended the outermost bank, you go a furlong upon a level strand, before you come to the immediate bank of the river." Any of these views

of the import of the phrases "in Jordan," "in the river of Jordan," used plainly with intention to point out the place where John exercised his ministry, will sufficiently explain them, without involving us in the inextricable difficulties which embarrass the theory, that John baptized only by immersion. To go indeed to a river to baptize, would, in such countries as our own, where water for the mere purpose of effusion may readily be obtained out of cisterns, pumps, &c, very naturally suggest to the simple

reader, that the reason for John's choice of a river was, that it afforded the means of immersion.

But in those countries the case was different. Springs, as we have said, were scarce, and the water for domestic purposes had to be fetched daily by the women in pitchers from the nearest rivers and fountains, which rendered the domestic supply scanty, and of course valuable. But even if this reason did not exist, baptism in rivers would not, as a matter of course, imply immersion.

Of this we have an instance in the customs of the people of Mesopotamia, mentioned in the Journal of Wolfe, the missionary. This sect of Christians call themselves "the followers of St. John the Baptist, who was a follower of Christ." Among many other questions, Mr. Wolfe inquired of one of them respecting their mode of baptism, and was answered, "The priests or bishop baptize children thirty days old. They take the child to the banks of the river; a relative or friend holds the child near

the surface of the water, while the priest sprinkles the element upon the child, and with prayers they name the child." (Journal, vol. ii, p. 311.) Mr. Wolfe asks, "Why do they baptize in rivers?" Answer: "Because St. John the Baptist baptized in the river Jordan."

The same account was given afterward by one of their bishops or high priests: "They c arry the children, after thirty days, to the river, the priest says a prayer, the godfather takes the child to the river,

while the priest sprinkles it with water." Thus we have in modern times river baptism without immersion; and among the Syrian Christians, though immersion is used, it does not take place till after the true baptismal rite, pouring water upon the child in the name of the trinity, has been performed.

The second proof adduced by the Immersionists is taken from the baptism of our Lord, who is said, Matt. 3:16, "to have gone up straightway out of the water." Here, however, the

preposition used signifies from, and anTbee ap= to· h·datos, is simply "he went up from the water." We grant that this might have been properly said in whatever way the baptism had been previously performed; but then it certainly in itself affords no argument on which to build the notion of the immersion of our Savior.

The great passage of the Immersionists, however, is Acts 8:38,39: "And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized

him; and when they were come up out of the water," &c. This is relied upon as a decisive proof of the immersion and emersion of the eunuch. If so, however, it proves too much; for nothing is said of the eunuch which is not said of Philip, "They went down both into the water," - "And when they were come up out of the water;" - and so Philip must have immersed himself as well as the eunuch. Nor will the prepositions determine the case; they would have been employed properly had Philip and the eunuch gone

into the water by partial or by entire immersion, and therefore come out of it on dry land; and with equal propriety, and according to the habitual use of the same prepositions by Greek writers, they would express going to the water, without going into it, and returning from it, and not out of it, for etc is spoken of place, and properly signifies at, or it indicates motion toward a certain limit, and, for any thing that appears to the contrary in the history of the eunuch's baptism, that limit may just as well be

placed at the nearest verge of the water as in the middle of it. Thus the LXX say, Isa. 26:2, "The king sent Rabshakeh from Lachish, etc, to Jerusalem," certainly not into it, for the city was not captured. The sons of the prophets "came etc, to Jordan to cut wood," 2 Kings 6:4. They did not, we suppose, go into the water to perform that work. Peter was bid to "go, etc, to the sea, and cast a hook," not surely to go into the sea; and our Lord, Matt. 5:1, "went up, eis, to a mountain," but not into it. The corresponding

preposition ek, which signifies, when used of place, from, out of, must be measured by the meaning of etc. When etc means into, then ek means out of; but when it means simply to, then ek can express no more than from. Thus this passage is nothing to the purpose of the Immersionists.

The next proof relied upon in favor of immersion is, John 3:22, 23: "After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judea, and there he tarried with them and baptized;

and John also was baptizing in AEnon, near to Salim, because there was much water there, and they came and were baptized." The Immersionists can see no reason for either Jesus or John baptizing where there was much water, but that they plunged their converts. The true reason for this has however been already given. Where could the multitudes who came for baptism be assembled?

Clearly, not in houses. The preaching was in the fields; and since the rite which was to follow a ministry

which made such an impression, and drew together such crowds, was baptism, the necessity of the case must lead the Baptist to Jordan or to some other district where, if a river was wanting, fountains at least existed. The necessity was equal in this case, whether the mode of baptism were that of aspersion, of pouring, or of immersion.

The Baptists, however, have magnified Aenon, which signifies the fountain of On, into a place of "many and great waters."

Unfortunately, however, no such powerful fountain, sending out many streams of water fit for plunging multitudes into, has ever been found by travelers, although the country has been often visited; and certainly if its streams had been of the copious and remarkable character assigned to them, they could not have vanished. It rather appears, however, that the "much water," or "many waters," in the text, refers rather to the whole tract of country, than to the fountain of on itself; because it appears to be

given by the evangelist as the reason why Jesus and his disciples came into the same neighborhood to baptize. Different baptisms were administered, and therefore in different places. The baptism administered by Jesus at this time was one of multitudes; this appears from the remark of one of John's disciples to his Master: "He that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him." The place or places, too, where Jesus baptized,

although in the same district, could not be very near, since John's disciple mentions the multitudes who came to be baptized by Jesus, or rather by his disciples, as a piece of information; and thus we find a reason for the mention of the much water, or many waters, with reference to the district of country itself, and not to the single fountain of On. The tract had probably many fountains in it, which, as being a peculiarity in a country not generally so distinguished, would lead to the use of the

expression, "much water," although not one of these fountains or wells might be sufficient to allow of the plunging of numbers of people, and probably was not. Indeed if the disciples of Jesus baptized by immersion, the Immersionists are much more concerned to discover "much water," "many waters," "large and deep streams," somewhere else in the district than at AEnon; because it is plain from the narrative, that the number of candidates for John's baptism had greatly fallen off' at that time, and

that the people now generally flocked to Christ. Hence the remark of John, verse 30, when his disciples had informed him that Jesus was baptizing in the neighborhood, and that "all men came to him," - "He must increase, I must decrease." Hence also the observation of the evangelist in the first verse of the next chapter, "The Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John."

As these instances all so plainly fail to serve the cause of immersion, we

need not dwell upon the others. The improbability of three thousand persons being immersed on the day of pentecost, has been already mentioned. The baptism of Saul, of Lydia, of the Philippian jailer, and of the family of Cornelius, are all instances of house baptism, and, for that reason, are still less likely to have been by plunging. The Immersionists, indeed, invent "tanks," or "baths." for this purpose, in all these houses: but, as nothing of the kind appears on the face of the history, or is even incidentally

suggested, suppositions prove nothing.

Thus all the presumptions before mentioned, against the practice of immersion, lie full against it, without any relief from the Scriptures themselves. Not one instance can be shown of that practice from the New Testament; while, so far as baptism was emblematical of the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, the doctrine of immersion wholly destroys its significancy. In fact, if the true mode of baptism be immersion only, then

must we wholly give up the phrase, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which in any other mode than that of pouring out was never administered.

The only argument left for the advocates of immersion is the supposed allusion to the mode of baptism contained in the words of St. Paul, Rom. 6:3, 4: "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism, into death; that, like as Christ was raised up

from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." It is necessary, however, to quote the next verses also, which are dependent upon the foregoing, "For if we have been PLANTED together,"

still by baptism, "in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection; knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not

serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin," v. 5-7. Why then do not the advocates of immersion go forward to these verses, so inseparably connected with those they are so ready to quote, and show us a resemblance, not only between baptism by immersion, and being buried with Christ; but also between immersion, and being "planted with Christ?" If the allusion of the apostle is to the planting of a young tree in the earth, there is clearly but a very partial, not a total immersion in the

case; and if it be to grafting a branch upon a tree, the resemblance is still more imperfect. Still further, as the apostle in the same connection speaks of our being "crucified with Christ," and that also by baptism, why do they not show us how immersion in water resembles the nailing of a body to a cross?

But this striking and important text is not to be explained by a fancied resemblance between a burial, as they choose to call it, of the body in water, and the burial of Christ; as

if a dip or a plunge could have any resemblance to that separation from the living, and that laying aside of a body in the sepulcher, which burial implies. This forced thought darkens and enervates the whole passage, instead of bringing forth its powerful sentiments into clearer view. The manifest object of the apostle in the whole of this part of his epistle, was to show, that the doctrine of justification by faith alone, which he had just been establishing, could not, in any true believer, lead to

licentiousness of life. "What then shall we say? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid! How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" The reason then which is given by the apostle why true believers cannot continue in sin, is, that they are

"dead to sin," which is his answer to the objection. Now, this mystical death to sin he proceeds to attribute to the instrumentality of baptism, taking it to be an act of that faith in Christ of which it was the external

expression; and then he immediately runs into a favorite comparison, which under various forms occurs in his writings, sometimes accompanied with the same allusion to baptism, and sometimes referring only to "faith" as the instrument, - a comparison between the mystical death, burial, and resurrection of believers, and the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.

This is the comparison of the text: not a comparison between our mystical death and baptism; nor between

baptism, and the death and burial of Christ; either of which lay wide of the apostle's intention. Baptism, as an act of faith, is, in fact, expressly made, not a figure of the effects which follow, as stated in the text, but the means of effecting them. "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death?" we enter by this means into the experience of its efficacy in effecting a mystical death in us; in other words, we die with him, or as it is expressed in verse 6, "Our old man is

crucified with him." Still farther, "by baptism," diß to· baptfsmatos,

through, or by means of, baptism, "we are buried with him;" we not only die to sin and the world, but we are separated wholly from it, as the body of Christ was separated from the living world, when laid in the sepulcher; the connection between sin and the world and us is completely broken, as those who are buried and put out of sight are no longer reckoned among men; nay, as the slave (for

the apostle brings in this figure also) is by death and burial wholly put out of the power of his former master, so, "that we should not serve sin; for he that is dead is freed from sin." But we also mystically rise with him; "that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life," having new connections, new habits, new enjoyments, and new hopes. We have a similar passage in Col. 2:12, and it has a similar interpretation: "Buried

with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." In the preceding verse the apostle had been speaking of the mystical death of Christians under the phrase, "putting off the body of the sins of the flesh;" then, as in his Epistle to the Romans, he adds our mystical burial with Christ, which is a heightened representation of death, and then also, our rising again with Christ. Here too all these three effects are attributed to

baptism as the means. We put off the body of sins "by the circumcision of Christ," that is, as we have seen, by Christian circumcision or baptism; we are buried with him by baptism; en being obviously used here, like dia, to denote the instrument; and by baptism we rise with him into a new life.

Now, to institute a comparison between a mode of baptism and the burial of Christ, wholly destroys the meaning of the passage; for how can the apostle speak of baptism as

an emblem of Christ's burial, when he argues from it as the instrument of our death unto sin, and separation from it by a mystical burial? Nor is baptism here made use of as the emblem of our own spiritual death, burial, and resurrection. As an emblem, even immersion, though it might put forth a clumsy type of burial and rising again, is wanting in not being emblematical of death; and yet all three, our mystical death, burial, and rising again, are distinctly spoken of, and must all be found represented in some

type. But the type made use of by the apostle is manifestly not baptism, but the death, the burial, and the resurrection of our Lord; and in this view he pursues this bold and impressive figure to even the verge of allegory, in the succeeding verses: "For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that

he liveth, he liveth unto God; likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

In the absence therefore of all proof, that, in any instance found in the New Testament, baptism was administered by immersion; with so many presumptions against that indecent practice as have been stated; with the decisive evidence also of a designed correspondence between the baptism, the pouring out, of the Holy

Spirit, and the baptism, the pouring out) of water; we may conclude, with confidence, that the latter was the apostolic mode of administering that ordinance; and that first washing, and then immersion, were introduced later, toward the latter end of the second century, along with several other superstitious additions to this important sacrament, originating in that "will worship" which presumed to destroy the simplicity of God's ordinances, under pretence of (4) rendering them more

emblematical and impressive. Even if immersion had been the original mode of baptizing, we should, in the absence of any command on the subject, direct or implied, have thought the Church at liberty to accommodate the manner of applying water to the body in the name of the trinity, in which the essence of the rite consists, to different climates and manners; but it is satisfactory to discover that all the attempts made to impose upon Christians a practice repulsive to the feelings, dangerous to the

health, and offensive to delicacy is destitute of all Scriptural authority, and of really primitive practice.

(4) Baptism, as an emblem, points out, 1. The washing away of the guilt and pollution of sin. 2.

The pouring out of the Holy Spirit. In Scripture it is made an emblem of these two, and of these only. Some of the superstitions above alluded to sin therefore by excess; but immersion sins by defect. It retains the emblematical character of the rite as to the washing

away of sin; but it loses it entirely as to the gift of the Holy Ghost; and, beyond the washing away of sin is an emblem of nothing for which we have any Scriptural authority to make it emblematical. Immersion, therefore, as distinct from every other mode of applying water to the, body, means nothing. To say that it figures our spiritual death and resurrection, has, we have seen, no authority from the texts used to prove it; and to make a sudden pop under water to be emblematical of burial, in

as far-fetched a conceit as any which adorns the Emblems of Quarles, without any portion of the ingenuity.

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57 THE INSTITUTIONS OF THE CHURCH - THE LORD'S SUPPER

The agreement and difference between baptism and the Lord's Sup-per are well stated by the Church of Scotland in its catechism: "The sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper agree, in

that the author of both is God; the spiritual part of both is Christ and his benefits; both are seals of the same covenant; to be dispensed by ministers of the Gospel, and none other; and to be continued in the Church of Christ until his second coming." "These sacraments differ, in that baptism is to be administered but once with water, - and that even to infants; whereas the Lord's Supper is to be administered often, in the elements of bread and wine, to represent and exhibit Christ as spiritual

nourishment to the soul, and to confirm our continuance and growth in him, and that only to such as are of years and ability to examine themselves."

As baptism was substituted for circumcision, so the Lord's Supper was put by our Savior in the place of the passover; and was instituted immediately after celebrating that ordinance for the last time with his disciples. The passover was an eminent type of our Lord's sacrifice and of its benefits; and since he was about to fulfill

that symbolical rite which from age to age had continued to exhibit it to the faith and hope of ancient saints, it could have no place under the new dispensation. Christ in person became the true passover; and a new rite was necessary to commemorate the spiritual deliverance of men, and to convey and confirm its benefits. The circumstances of its institution are explanatory of its nature and design.

On the night when the first born of Egypt were slain,

the children of Israel were commanded to take a lamb for every house, to kill it, and to sprinkle the blood upon the posts of their doors, so that the destroying angel might pass over the houses of all who had attended to this injunction.

Not only were the first-born children thus preserved alive, but the effect was the deliverance of the whole nation from their bondage in Egypt, and their becoming the visible Church and people of God by virtue of a special

covenant. In commemoration of these events, the feast of the passover was made annual, and at that time all the males of Judea assembled before the Lord in Jerusalem; a lamb was provided for every house; the blood was poured under the altar by the priests, and the lamb was eaten by the people in their tents or houses. At this domestic and religious feast, every master of a family took the cup of thanksgiving, and gave thanks with his family to the God of Israel. As soon,

therefore, as our Lord, acting as the master of his family, the disciples, had finished this the usual paschal ceremony; he proceeded to a new and distinct action: "He took bread," the bread then on the table, "and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave it to them, saying, This is my body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me.

Likewise also the cup after supper," the cup with the wine which had been used in the paschal supper, "saying, This cup is the

New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you;" or as it is expressed by St. Matthew, "And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

That this was the institution of a standing rite, and not a temporary action to be confined to the disciples then present with him, is made certain from 1 Cor. 11:23-26: "For I have received of the Lord that

which also I delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks he brake it, and said, Take, eat, this is my body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood; this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till

he come." From these words we learn, 1. That St. Paul received a special revelation as to this ordinance, which must have had a higher object than the mere commemoration of an historical fact, and must be supposed to have been made for the purpose of enjoining it upon him to establish this rite in the Churches raised up by him, and of enabling him rightly to understand its authority and purport, where he found it already appointed by the first founders of the first Churches. 2. That the

command of Christ, "This do in remembrance of Me," which was originally given to the disciples present with Christ at the last passover, is laid by St. Paul upon the Corinthians. 3. That he regarded the Lord's Supper as a rite to be "often" celebrated, and that in all future time until the Lord himself should "come" to judge the world. The perpetual obligation of this ordinance cannot therefore be reasonably disputed.

Of the nature of this great and affecting rite of

Christianity, different and very opposite opinions have been formed, arising partly from the elliptical and figurative modes of expression adopted by Christ at its institution; but more especially from the influence of superstition upon some, and the extreme of affected rationalism upon others.

The first is the monstrous theory of the Church of Rome, as contradictory to the Holy Scriptures, whose words it professes to receive in their literal meaning, as it is revolting

to the senses and reason of mankind.

"It is conceived that the words, 'This is my body; this is my blood,' are to be understood in their most literal sense; that when Jesus pronounced these words, he changed, by his almighty power, the bread upon the table into his body, and the wine into his blood, and really delivered his body and blood into the hands of his apostles; and that at all times when the Lord's Supper is administered, the priest, by pronouncing these words

with a good intention, has the power of making a similar change. This change is known by the name of transubstantiation; the propriety of which name is conceived to consist in this, that although the bread and wine are not changed in figure, taste, weight, or any other accident, it is believed that the substance of them is completely destroyed; that in place of it, the substance of the body and blood of Christ, although clothed with all the sensible properties of bread and wine, is truly

present; and that the persons who receive what has been consecrated by pronouncing these words, do not receive bread and wine, but literally partake of the body and blood of Christ, and really eat his flesh, and drink his blood. It is farther conceived, that the bread and wine thus changed, are presented by the priest to God; and he receives the name of priest, because in laying them upon the altar he offers to God a sacrifice, which, although it be distinguished from all others by being without the

shedding of blood, is a true propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of the dead and of the living, - the body and blood of Christ, which were presented on the cross, again presented in the sacrifice of the mass.

It is conceived, that the materials of this sacrifice, being truly the body and blood of Christ, possess an intrinsic virtue, which does not depend upon the disposition of him who receives them, but operates immediately upon all who do not obstruct the operation by a mortal sin.

Hence it is ac-counted of great importance for the salvation of the sick and dying, that parts of these materials should be sent to them; and it is understood that the practice of partaking in private of a small portion of what the priest has thus transubstantiated, is, in all respects, as proper and salutary as joining with others in the Lord's Supper. It is farther conceived, that as the bread and wine, when converted into the [body and] blood of Christ, are a natural object of reverence

and adoration to Christians, it is highly proper to worship them upon the altar; and that it is expedient to carry them about in solemn procession, that they may receive the homage of all who meet them. What had been transubstantiated was therefore lifted up for the purpose of receiving adoration, both when it was shown to the people at the altar, and when it was carried about. Hence arose that expression in the Church of Rome, the elevation of the host, elevatio hostiae. But, as the

wine in being carried about was exposed to accidents inconsistent with the veneration due to the body and blood of Christ, it became customary to send only the bread; and, in order to satisfy those who for this reason did not receive the wine, they were taught that, as the bread was changed into the body of Christ, they partook by concomitancy of the blood with the body. In process of time, the people were not allowed to partake of the cup; and it was said, that when Jesus spake these words, 'Drink ye all of it,'

he was addressing himself only to his apostles, so that his command was fulfilled when the priests, the successors of the apostles, drank of the cup, although the people were excluded. And thus the last part of this system conspired with the first in exalting the clergy very far above the laity. For the same persons who had the power of changing bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, and who presented what they had thus made, as a sacrifice for the sins of others, enjoyed the partaking of the cup, while

communion in one kind only was permitted to the people." (Bishop Tomline on the Articles.) So violently are these notions opposed to the common sense of man-kind, that the ground to which the Romish writers have always been driven in their defense, is the authority of their Church, and the necessity of implicit faith in its interpretations of Scripture; principles which shut out the use of Scripture entirely, and open the door to every heresy and fanatical folly. But for the ignorance and

superstition of Europe during the middle ages, this monstrous perversion of a sacred rite could not have been effected, and even then it was not established as an article of faith without many struggles. Almost all writers on the Protestant controversy will furnish a sufficient confutation of this capital attempt to impose upon the credulity of mankind; and to them, should it need any refutation, the reader may be referred.

The mind of Luther so powerful to throw off dogmas which had nothing but human authority to support them, was as to the sacrament, held in the bonds of early association. He concluded that the body and blood of Christ are really present in the Lord's Supper; but, aware of the absurdities and self-contradictions of transubstantiation, he laid hold of a doctrine which some writers, in the Romish Church itself, had continued to prefer to the papal dogma above stated. This was designated by the

term consubstantiation, which allows that the bread and wine remain the same after consecration as before. Thus he escapes the absurdity of contradicting the very senses of men. It was held, however, by Luther, that though the bread and wine remain unchanged, yet that, together with them, the body and blood of Christ are literally received by the communicants. Some of his immediate followers did not, however, admit more on this point, than that the body and blood of Christ were really present in the

sacrament; but that the manner of that presence was an inexplicable mystery. Yet, in some important respects, Luther and the Consubstantialists wholly escaped the errors of the Church of Rome as to this sacrament. They denied that it was a sacrifice; and that the presence of the body and blood of Christ gave to it any physical virtue acting independently of the disposition of the receiver; and that it rendered the elements the objects of adoration. Their error, therefore, may be

considered rather of a speculative than of a practical nature; and was adopted probably in deference to what was conceived to be the literal meaning of the words of Christ when the Lord's Supper was instituted.

A third view was held by some of Luther's contemporaries, which has been thus described:

"Carolostadt, a professor with Luther in the university of Wittenberg, and Zuinglius, a native of Switzerland, the founder of the Reformed Churches, or

those Protestant Churches which are not Lutheran, taught that the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper are the signs of the absent body and blood of Christ; that when Jesus said, 'This is my body, This is my blood,' he used a figure exactly of the same kind with that, by which, according to the abbreviations continually practiced in ordinary speech, the sign is often put for the thing signified. As this figure is common, so there were two circumstances which would prevent the apostles from

misunderstanding it, when used in the institution of the Lord's Supper. The one was, that they saw the body of Jesus then alive, and therefore could not suppose that they were eating it. The other was, that they had just been partaking of a Jewish festival, in the institution of which the very same figure had been used. For in the night in which the children of Israel escaped out of Egypt, God said of the lamb which he commanded every house to eat and slay, "It is the Lord's passover,' Exod. 12:11; not meaning

that it was the action of the Lord passing over every house, but the token and pledge of that action. It is admitted by all Christians, that there is such a figure used in one part of the institution. When our Lord says, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood,' none suppose him to mean the cup is the covenant, but all believe that he means to call it the memorial, or the sign, or the seal of the covenant. If it be understood, that, agreeably to the analogy of language, he uses a similar figure when he says, 'This is my

body,' and that he means nothing more than, 'This is the sign of my body,' we are delivered from all the absurdities implied in the literal interpretation, to which the Roman Catholics think it necessary to adhere.

We give the words a more natural interpretation than the Lutherans do, who consider, 'This is my body,' as intended to express a proposition which is totally different, ' My body is with this;' and we escape from the difficulties in which

they are involved by their forced interpretation.

"Farther, by this method of interpretation, there is no ground left for that adoration which the Church of Rome pays to the bread and wine; for they are only the signs of that which is believed to be absent. There is no ground for accounting the Lord's Supper to the dishonor of 'the High Priest of our profession,' a new sacrifice presented by an earthly priest; for the bread and wine are only the memorials of that sacrifice

which was once offered on the cross. And, lastly, this interpretation destroys the popish idea of a physical virtue in the Lord's Supper; for if the bread and wine are signs of what is absent, their use must be to excite the remembrance of it; but this is a use which cannot possibly exist with regard to any, but those whose minds are thereby put into a proper frame; and therefore the Lord's Supper becomes, instead of a charm, a mental exercise, and the efficacy of it arises not ex opere operato, but ex opere operantis."

With much truth, this opinion falls short of the whole truth, and therefore it has been made the basis of that view of the Lord's Supper which reduces it to a mere religious commemoration of the death of Christ, with this addition, that it has a natural fitness to produce salutary emotions, to possess our minds with religious reflections, and to strengthen virtuous resolutions. Some divines of the Church of England, and the Socinians generally, have adopted,

and endeavored to defend, this interpretation.

The fourth opinion is that of the Reformed Churches, and was taught with great success by Calvin. It has been thus well epitomized by Dr. Hill:-

"He knew that former attempts to reconcile the systems of Luther and Zuinglius had proved fruitless. But he saw the importance of uniting Protestants upon a point, with respect to which they agreed in condemning the errors of the Church of Rome; and his zeal in

renewing the attempt was probably quickened by the sincere friendship which he entertained for Melancthon, who was the successor of Luther, while he himself had succeeded Zuinglius in conducting the reformation in Switzerland. He thought that the system of Zuinglius did not come up to the force of the expressions used in Scripture; and, although he did not approve of the manner in which the Lutherans explain these expressions, it appeared to him that there was a sense in which the full

significancy of them might be preserved, and a great part of the Lutheran language might continue to be used. As he agreed with Zuinglius, in thinking that the bread and wine were the signs of the body and blood of Christ, which were not locally present, he renounced both transubstantiation and consubstantiation. He agreed farther with Zuinglius, in thinking that the use of these signs, being a memorial of the sacrifice once offered on the cross, was intended to produce a moral effect. But

he taught, that to all who remember the death of Christ in a proper manner, Christ, by the use of these signs, is spiritually present, - present to their minds; and he considered this spiritual presence as giving a significancy, that goes far beyond the Socinian sense, to these words of Paul: 'The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? the bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?' It is not the blessing pronounced which makes any change upon the

cup; but to all who join with becoming affection in the thanksgiving then uttered in the name of the congregation, Christ is spiritually present, so that they may emphatically be said to partake, koinoneo, mete-chein, of his body and blood; because his body and blood being spiritually present, convey the same nourishment to their souls, the same quickening to the spiritual life, as bread and wine do to the natural life. Hence Calvin was led to connect the discourse in John 4, with the Lord's Supper; not in that literal

sense which is agreeable to popish and Lutheran ideas, as if the body of Christ was really eaten, and his blood really drunk by any; but in a sense agreeable to the expression of our Lord in the conclusion of that discourse, 'The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life;' that is, when I say to you, 'Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me and I in him; he shall live by me, for my flesh is meat indeed,' you are to understand these words, not in a literal but in a spiritual sense. The

spiritual sense adopted by the Socinians is barely this, that the doctrine of Christ is the food of the soul, by cherishing a life of virtue here, and the hope of a glorious life hereafter. The Calvinists think, that into the full meaning of the figure used in these words, there enter not merely the exhortations and instructions which a belief of the Gospel affords, but also that union between Christ and his people which is the consequence of faith, and that communication of grace and strength by which they

are quickened in well doing, and prepared for the discharge of every duty.

"According to this system, the full benefit of the Lord's Supper is peculiar to those who partake worthily. For while all who eat the bread and drink the wine may be said to show the Lord's death, and may also receive some devout impressions, they only to whom Jesus is spiritually present share in that spiritual nourishment which arises from partaking of his body and blood.

According to this system, eating and drinking unworthily has a farther sense than enters into the Socinian system; and it becomes the duty of every Christian to examine himself, not only with regard to his knowledge, but also with regard to his general conduct, before he eats of that bread and drinks of that cup. It becomes also the duty of those who have the inspection of Christian societies, to exclude from this ordinance persons, of whom there is every reason to believe that they are

strangers to the sentiments which it presupposes, and without which none are prepared for holding that communion with Jesus which it implies." (Theological Lectures.) With this view the doctrine of the Church of England seems mainly to agree, except that we may perhaps perceive in her services a few expressions somewhat favorable to the views of Luther and Melancthon, whose authority had great weight with Archbishop Cranmer. This, however, appears only in certain phrases; for

the twenty-eighth article declares with sufficient plainness, that "the body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the Supper only after a heavenly and spiritual manner; and the mean whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper, is faith." "Some of our early English reformers," says Bishop Tomline, "were Lutherans, and consequently they were at first disposed to lean toward consubstantiation; but they seem soon to have discovered their error, for in the articles of 1552, it is

expressly said, 'A faithful man ought not either to believe or openly confess the real and bodily presence, as they term it, of Christ's flesh and blood in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.' This part of the article was omitted in 1502, probably with a view to give less offence to those who maintained the corporal presence, and to comprehend as many as possible in the established Church." (Exposition of the Articles.) The article as it now stands, and not particular expressions in the liturgy, must however

be taken to be the opinion of the Church of England upon this point, and it substantially agrees with the New Testament.

The sacramental character of this ordinance is the first point to be established, in order to a true conception of its nature and import. It is more than a commemorative rite, it is commemorative sacramentally; in other words, it is a commemorative sign and seal of the covenant of our redemption.

The first proof of this may be deduced from our Lord's words used in the institution of the ordinance: "This is my body, this is my blood." are words which show a most intimate connection between the elements, and that which was represented by them, the sacrificial offering of the body and blood of Christ, as the price of our redemption; they were the signs of what was "given for us," surrendered to death in our room and stead, that we might have the benefit of liberation from eternal death. Again,

"This is the New Testament," or covenant. "in my blood." The covenant itself was ratified by the blood of Christ, and it is therefore called by St.

Paul, "the blood of the everlasting covenant;" and the cup had so intimate a connection with that covenant, as to represent it and the means of its establishment, or of its acquiring validity, - the shedding of the blood of our Savior. It is clear, therefore, that the rite of the Lord's Supper is a covenant rite, and

consequently a sacrament; a visible sign and seal on the part of Him who made the covenant, that it was established in, and ratified by, the sacrificial death of Christ.

As it bears this covenant or sacramental character on the part of the Institutor, so also on the part of the recipients. They were all to eat the bread in "remembrance" of Christ; in remembrance, certainly, of his death in particular; yet not as a mere historical event, but of his death as sacrificial; and therefore

the commemoration was to be on their part an acknowledgment of the doctrine of the vicarious and propitiatory nature of the death of Christ, and an act of faith in it.

Then as to the cup, they were commanded to drink of it, for a reason also particularly given, "for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins:" the recognition, therefore, implied in the act, was not merely that Christ's blood was shed; but that it was shed as the

blood of "the new covenant," and for "the remission of sins;" a recognition which could only take place in consequence of "faith in his blood," as the blood of atonement.

Again, says St. Paul, as taught by the particular revelation he received as to the Lord's Supper,

"For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show or publish the Lord's death until he come;" which publication of his death was not the mere declaration of the fact

of "the Lord's death," but of his death according to the apostolic doctrine, as the true propitiation for sin the benefits of which were to be received by faith. Thus then we see in the Lord's Supper the visible token and pledge of a covenant of mercy in the blood of Christ, exhibited by God its author; and on the part of man a visible acknowledgment of this covenant so ratified by the sacrifice of Christ, and an act of entire faith in its truth and efficacy in order to the remission of sins, and the conferring of all

other spiritual benefits. As a sign, it exhibits, 1. The infinite love of God, to the world, who gave "his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life." 2. The love of Christ, who "died the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." 3. The extreme nature of his sufferings, which were unto death. 4. The vicarious and sacrificial character of that death, as a sin offering and a propitiation; in virtue of which only, a covenant of grace was entered into with

man by the offended God. 5. The benefits derived from it through believing, "remission of sins;" and the nourishment of the soul in spiritual life and vigor, by virtue of a. vital "communion" with Christ, so that it is advanced and perfected in holiness, "until he come" to confer upon his disciples the covenanted blessing of eternal life. As a seal it is a constant assurance, on the part of God, of the continuance of this covenant of redemption in full undiminished force from age to age; it is a

pledge to every penitent who believes in Christ, and receives this sacrament in profession of his entire reliance upon the merits of Christ's passion for forgiveness, that he is an object of merciful regard and acceptance; there is in it also, as to every one who thus believes and is accepted, a constant exhibition of Christ as the spiritual food of the soul, to be received by faith, that he may grow thereby; and a renewed assurance of the bestowment of the full grace of the new covenant, in the accomplishment of

all its promises, both in this life and in that which is to come. In every celebration, the sign of all these gracious acts, provisions, and hopes, is exhibited, and God condescends thus to repeat his pledges of faithfulness and love to the Church of Christ, purchased by his blood. The members of that Church, on the other hand, renew their acceptance of, and reliance upon, the new covenant; they publish their faith in Christ; they glory in his cross, his sacrificial though shameful death, as the wisdom of

God, and the power of God; they feast upon the true pass-over victim by their faith, and they do this with joy and thanksgiving, on account of a greater deliverance than that of the Israelites from Egypt, of which they are the subjects. It was this predominance of thanksgiving in celebrating this hallowed rite, which at so early a period of the Church attached to the Lord's Supper the title of "The Eucharist."

We may conclude this view by a few general observations.

1. The very nature of the ordinance of the Lord's Supper excludes from participating in it not only open unbelievers, but all who reject the doctrine of the atonement made by the vicarious death of Christ for "the remission of sins." Such persons have indeed tacitly acknowledged this, by reducing the rite to a mere commemoration of the fact of Christ's death, and of those virtues of humility, benevolence, and

patience, which his sufferings called forth. If, therefore; the Lord's Supper be in truth much more than this; if it recognize the sacrificial character of Christ's death, and the doctrine of "faith in his blood," as necessary to our salvation, this is "an altar of which they have no right to eat" who reject these doctrines; and from the Lord's table all such persons ought to be repelled by ministers, whenever, from compliance with custom, or other motives, they would approach it.

2. It is equally evident that when there is no evidence in persons of true repentance for sin, and of desire for salvation, according to the terms of the Gospel, they are disqualified from partaking at "the table of the Lord." They eat and drink unworthily, and fall therefore into "condemnation."

The whole act is indeed on their part an act of hold profanation or of hypocrisy; they profess by this act to repent, and have no sorrow for sin; they

profess to seek deliverance from its guilt and power, and yet remain willingly under its bondage; they profess to trust in Christ's death for pardon, and are utterly unconcerned respecting either; they profess to feed upon Christ, and hunger and thirst after nothing but the world; they place before themselves the sufferings of Christ; but when they "look upon him whom they have pierced," they do not "mourn because of him," and they grossly offend the all-present Majesty of heaven, by thus making light of

Christ, and "grieving the Holy Spirit."

3. It is a part of Christian discipline in every religious society to prevent such persons from communicating with the Church. They are expressly excluded by apostolic authority, as well as by the original institution of this sacrament, which was confined to Christ's disciples, and ministers would "partake of other men's sins," if knowingly they were to admit to the Supper of the Lord those

who in their spirit and lives deny him.

4. On the other hand, the table of the Lord is not to be surrounded with superstitious terrors. All are welcome there who truly love Christ, and all who sincerely desire to love, serve, and obey him. All truly penitent persons; all who feel the burden of their sins, and are willing to renounce them; all who take Christ as the sole foundation of their hope, and are ready to commit their eternal interests to the merits of his sacrifice

and intercession, are to be encouraged to "draw near with faith, and to take this holy sacrament to their comfort." In it God visibly exhibits and confirms his covenant to them, and he invites them to become parties to it, by the act of their receiving the elements of the sacrament in faith.

5. For the frequency of celebrating this ordinance we have no rule in the New Testament. The early Christians observed it every Sabbath, and exclusion from it was

considered a severe sentence of the Church, when only temporary. The expression of the apostle, "as often as ye eat this bread," intimates that the practice of communion was frequent; and perhaps the general custom in this country of a monthly administration, will come up to the spirit of the ancient institution. That it was designed, like the passover to be an annual celebration only, has no evidence from Scripture, and is contradicted by the most ancient practice.

6. The habitual neglect of this ordinance by persons who profess a true faith in Christ, is highly censurable. We speak not now of Quakers and Mystics, who reject it altogether, in the face of the letter of their Bibles; but of many who seldom or never communicate, principally from habits of inattention to an obligation which they do not profess to deny. In this case a plain command of Christ is violated, though not perhaps with direct intention: and the benefit of that singularly affecting

mean of grace is lost, in which our Savior renews to us the pledges of his love, repeats the promises of his covenant, and calls for invigorated exercises of our faith, only to feed us the more richly with the broad that comes down from heaven. If a peculiar condemnation falls upon them who partake "unworthily," then a peculiar blessing must follow from partaking worthily; and it therefore becomes the duty of every minister to explain the obligation, and to show the advantages of this

sacrament, and earnestly to enforce its regular observance upon all those who give satisfactory evidence of "repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ."

58 THE INSTITUTIONS OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH – SYMBOLIC DRESS DEMONSTRATING SUBMISSION TO MALE AUTHORITY

INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS

In Paul's letters to the Corinthians we get some of the clearest views of the actual difficulties encountered by Christianity in non-Christian communities, and see the religion of Christ confronted by the culture, the customs, the various social arrangements, and the vices of the Pagan world.

Some Practical Questions.— Many are the questions that poured in

upon Paul, on whom rested the care of all the churches. May we eat with our heathen relatives? May we intermarry with thosewho are not Christians? May we marry at all? If we are married and one becomes a Christian, must such an one dissolve the marriage relation? Can slaves continue in the service of heathen masters? What is the relation of the communion to the ordinary meal? How about men and women praying with their heads covered or uncovered?

As we read Paul's answers to these and other questions, we are impressed with the wisdom of God as manifest in Paul's calmness and patience, intellectual vigor, practical sagacity, the brevity and yet the completeness of the discussion of these intricate problems. In the subject under consideration we also have an admirable illustration of Paul's manner of solving all practical difficulties by means of principles which are as true and useful for us today as they were for

those primitive Christians who heard Paul's own voice teaching them.

Paul's Methods of Instruction.— In treating ethical or practical subjects Paul is never content with a mere rule for the time being, but the decisions are based upon the profoundest Christian principles. Whoever therefore will endeavor to argue away or make void the teaching of I Cor. 11:1-16 may with equal propriety do the same with

any and all of the teachings in this epistle.

What would you think of a man who would say that Paul's teaching about charity, communion, marriage, self-denial, idolatry, fornication, etc., were only rules for that day and are now out of date? And what about the individual who endeavors to twist or eradicate (if possible) the teaching presented in I Cor. 11:1-16 in order to meet the approval of an unconverted world? "If any man shall add unto these things, God

shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book" (Rev. 22:18, 19). Is if possible that by disobedience we may add to or take from? It certainly is; and may none of us deal lightly with any part of the inspired Word.

AN EXPOSITION OF I COR. 11:1-16

Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ. Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you (vs. 1, 2).

The apostle here desires to express his satisfaction that on the whole they had adhered to the instructions he had already given them while at Corinth. “I praise you, brethren,” said he, that ye remember me in all

things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you." "Ordinances," sometimes translated "traditions," means doctrine taught either by word (direct from the mouth or by epistle—writing—II Thes. 2:15). Note also that the ordinances which he gives are not merely Paul's own opinions as to what might be expedient in view of the customs of that day, but he says of himself, "I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you" (V. 23—See also I Cor. 14:37).

But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God (V. 3).

In the divine arrangement in the creation, God, standing at the head, created all things through and for Christ (Col. 1:15-17; Jno. 1:3; Heb. 1:2), thus showing Christ's headship. Note also Gen. 1:26, 27: "Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion

So God created man in his own image." "And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him" (Gen. 2:18). So man, with woman as a help, looked to Christ as their head, and they (man, and woman as a help) were the head of lower things (Gen. 1:26).

This divine headship in Christ was partially, if not wholly, lost in the sin of Eve who, instead of being a help to man, led him away (Gen. 3:12), and a part of woman's curse for her

transgression (I Tim. 2:14) was that now man should rule over her (Gen. 3:16)—be her head. Hence in uncivilized countries woman is largely a slave, subject to the desires of man—under the curse. In civilization, which is only a step between uncivilization and Christianity, woman struggles and by her own power endeavors to free herself from the curse—a slave to man—and to rise to be his equal or even superior. But with all her struggles she cannot succeed in becoming independent of man.

Woman is not so strong as man physically and can never expect to have the authority over him. Even as civilized man without Christ can never rise to his highest and greatest liberty, so woman can never attain to any nobler and higher calling than to accept her position in and through Christ, and be "an help meet for man"—a glory to man. Christ restores what was lost in man and in woman, and hence is their spiritual head. Woman accepting Christ and taking her position in the divine plan,

recognizes man as her human head. Thus we arrive at the foundation truth as stated by Paul—God, Christ, man, woman.

This relation of Christian woman to Christian man is not that servile, slave-like kind seen in heathen countries, but it is a relation of love, as that between father and son, mother and daughter, Christ and the Church. “As the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands . . . . Husbands, love your wives” (Eph. 5:24, 25).

The inward change in woman as she becomes a Christian and worships Christ and God independently of man (for in Christ there is "neither male nor female"—Gal. 3:28) does not dissolve her original relation to him (as "a help meet for him," a "glory to him"), but it rather intensifies her relation by creation and brings her back to her Edenic position. While it is true, as Paul teaches, that, so far as woman's connection with Christ goes, there is no distinction of sex (to the woman, as to

the man, the offer of salvation is made directly), yet it is equally true that the Christian woman is to recognize her social position as decreed by God, and she should acknowledge faithfully and willingly that man is her human head.

When a boy becomes a Christian it does not sever his social relations to his parents but rather confirms them. When a servant becomes a Christian it does not release him from subjection to his master but rather renders the duty

more sacred. Christ also, though He thought it not robbery to be equal with God, made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Himself the form of a servant; yet God highly exalted Him (Phil. 2:5-9). "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." So woman, equal with man in salvation, acknowledging her position as subject to her human head, is exalted far above any position which this world has to offer her.

Every man praying or prophesying, having his

head covered, dishonoreth his head (V. 4).

Man, who is the image and glory of God, and who has his head-ship in the unseen Christ, dishonors his head (Christ), when he prays or prophesies with his head covered (veiled—R. V.).

But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoreth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven (V. 5).

Let us notice that both her spiritual Head (Christ) and

her human head (man) are dishonored:

1. Christ her divine Head is dishonored by her disobedience to the divine plan. All who adopt their own plans and theories in preference to the plan given by the inspired Word thereby dishonor Christ and God.

2. Christian man (her human head) is dishonored when the woman (created as a help meet for him) refuses to accept her position or to cover (veil—R. V.) her head when praying or prophesying

(which is given her as a sign that she has accepted her position).

As children who disobey the Word of God dishonor their parents; as Christian people who refuse to submit to the higher powers receive to themselves condemnation (Rom. 13:1, 2), thereby bringing dishonor to Christ and the Church; so Christian women who substitute some other way for the Bible way are a dishonor to Christian man.

3. “For that is all one as if she were shaven.” In verse 15 we are told that the long hair is a glory to woman. Now as woman is deprived of that glory when her hair is shaven off, so is the Christian man deprived of his glory when the woman (the help meet for him) refuses to wear the sign which shows her position in the divine relationship between man and woman.

For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or

shaven, let her be covered (V. 6).

Paul reasons that if a woman will not cover (veil—R. V.) her head when praying and prophesying (thereby dishonoring Christ and man) she deserves nothing less than to be shorn or shaven (which would be a shame unto her). But if this be a shame to her, let her be covered (veiled—R. V.) lest she bring like shame to him and to others by her disobedience to the divine plan.

This verse also proves that Paul could not mean that woman's hair could be used for a prayer head-covering, for if she "be not covered" (with hair) how could she be shorn? Here is the divine edict: "If the woman he not covered, (veiled—R. V). let her ALSO he shorn"

For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of the man (V. 7).

Man ought not to pray or prophesy with his head covered, "forasmuch as he

is the image and glory of God." Woman ought to worship with her head covered, for she "is the glory of the man." Man (the glory of God), having his head-ship in Christ and God (the unseen), head uncovered—woman (the glory of man), with her head-ship in man (the seen) and Christ, head covered.

For the man is not of the woman; hut the woman of the man. (V. 8).

To prove the Christian woman's relation to man, reference is here made to

the creation—man formed first, the woman formed of the man.

Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man (V. 9).

A second argument is drawn from the purpose of the creation (Gen. 2:18)—neither the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man.

For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels (V. 10).

Revised Version, “Sign of authority.” In the original Greek this word power is “exousia” which, as used in Matt. 9:8 and 10:1 means power to do something. In Jno. 10:18 and Acts 5:4 it means liberty or license. In Matt. 9:6 and 21:23 it means right, authority, full power. In Jno. 1:12 it means dignity, honor, etc. From all this we conclude that the “power” or “sign of authority” is a symbol of dignity, honor, position, authority, inherent power, etc.

To be a sign of authority, a thing must be recognized as such. A vessel claiming to belong to the United States and sailing with a piece of sail cloth fastened to its mast will not be recognized as having authority back of her. It is only when the "stars and stripes" (an emblem adopted by the United States for that purpose) are seen floating from her flag-staff that she is recognized as being vested with authority. Likewise a hat, bonnet, hood, or any other article of apparel used for protection, or perhaps for

fashion's sake, cannot be recognized as a "sign of authority;" for they have never been adopted by the Church as such, neither are they so recognized by the world.

The plain cap, usually white, is not used for the protection of the head against heat or cold, and has no other use except that for which the Church has adopted it—a sign showing Christian woman's restored position in and through Christ; not under the curse (Gen. 3:16), but as "an help meet for man"

(Gen. 2:20), as a glory of man (V. 7), as now having honor, dignity, inherent power, etc.

"For this cause," the several reasons given before, and "because of the angels." The good angels are "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation" (Heb. 1 :14). They are to minister to faithful, obedient woman as well as to faithful, obedient man, for "in Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female." Now if God would curse an

angel who teaches wrong doctrines (Gal. 1:8), and put in chains the angels who kept not their first estate (Jude 6), can we expect a faithful angel to minister to those who would be willingly disobedient to God's plan and order? If good angels do not minister, who will? A fallen angel might help to separate us from the love of God (Rom. 8:38). "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Will God be for us if we set ourselves against His divine plan and counsel? A glance at those who say, "Lord, Lord," and

do not the will of the Father in heaven (Matt. 7:21) will show the truth of God's Word.

Woman's slavery to Fashion is a confirmation of the truth of God's Word. Refusing to be subject to the will of God, she (perhaps) unconsciously but devotedly bows to the will of unconverted mankind and directs her powers to attract and please man, sacrificing health, comfort, and modesty, in her blind submission under the curse, striving harder to

please; men than to please God.

May every woman who does not cover her head with a special sign-covering be honest and turn her thoughts upon herself, and see if she is not an actual witness to the truth of God's Word. May every local church, or any sister in the Lord who drops her devotional covering, honestly test herself whether it is not simply exchanging the divine plan for a man-made plan, thus affording more freedom to walk with the world. And

are not those churches which once upheld this doctrine but have now dropped it, living witnesses that modesty coupled with Holy Ghost power is fast giving way to worldliness and lack of power?

Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman: but all things of God (Vs. 11, 12).

In the preceding verses the main arguments were to show woman's position. In

these verses Paul gives a caution lest the inference be carried too far. Here is shown the mutual oneness of the man and the woman in the Lord. They were made the one for the other. As it was “not good that the man should be alone,” the woman was made for the man— the man a defence, a help, a comfort to the woman; the woman “an help meet for man.” In marriage both are to be “one flesh” (Gen. 2:24). All this is planned and arranged by divine wisdom and power.

Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered? (V. 13)

After setting forth the foregoing principles, Paul now appeals to woman's better judgment. And since he appeals to her judgment, he now takes her on the ground of Nature, aside from revelation, and shows Nature's covering, the hair, which aside from worship and the revealed will of God, would be all the covering needed, and with the hair only for a covering woman shows

that her religion is only that which is shown by Nature and not 'by our Lord Jesus Christ.

Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering (Vs. 14, 15).

Since you understand by nature that man is to have short hair and woman is to have long hair (a difference even in nature), would it not be reasonable to have the revealed Word of God

holding out to us a difference (man uncovered, woman covered) ? “Her hair is given her for a covering.” All Bible scholars agree that the covering, peribolaiou, her hair (nature’s covering), cannot mean the same covering mentioned in verses 4, 5, 6 katakalupto, or the word power (a “sign of authority”), exousia, as used in verse 10.

But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God (V. 16).

Contentious about what? That which he has just been teaching. “No such custom.” What custom? Of women praying or prophesying with uncovered heads. “Neither the churches of God.” An additional argument appealing to the surrounding churches, where no custom putting aside the covering was to be found. Clarke says, “If she will not wear a veil, let her carry the badge of infamy.”

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Finally, let us not lose sight of God's order of arrangements, but hold fast the blessed Word. Someone says, "There are weightier matters than this to talk about." Grant it. But this is a part of God's Word, and should be obeyed reverently. There are sins of omission as well as of commission. "These things ought ye to have done, and not to have left the other undone."

The revealed Word of God consists of—

1. Facts, which are to be believed—faith.

2. Promises, to be realized, now and in the future—hope.

3. Commandments, which are to be obeyed—obedience, a test of character.

Summarizing Paul's teaching concerning the devotional covering, we conclude—

1. That the things which Paul taught are for the

enlightenment and obedience of all people.

As evidence of this read Acts 9:15, I Cor. 14:37, Gal. 1:8, 9, II Thess. 3:6.

2. Man should worship with his head uncovered.

This fact is so clearly stated (V. 4) that it needs no defence.

3. Woman should worship with her head covered.

This teaching (Vs. 5, 6, 10) is likewise clear. It requires no great scholarship to comprehend these truths. All we need to do is to open

our eyes and in simple faith read what God through Paul has revealed to man.

4. This covering is something distinct from the long hair.

This truth is evident, (1) because of the word "also" in V. 6; (2) because of the two Greek words, "katakaluptetai" and "peribolaion," from which the two words, for artificial and natural coverings are taken; (3) because of the word "power," or, as used in revised version, "sign of authority" found in V. 10. There is no way of

reasoning(?) this to mean the long hair, for both converted and unconverted women wear it (nature teaches them that lesson) and there is no sign of devotion about it.

5. This covering is something that is distinct from the bonnet, the hat, the hood, or even a veil that is zoom for protection, or any other protection covering worn by woman.

Nothing that is not worn as the "sign and recognized for that purpose, will answer to Paul's teaching on this subject.

6. This covering is a veiling, worn in obedience to the divine command.

No one can read the revised version honestly and come to any other conclusion. The words, “veil,” “veiled,” etc. admit of no other construction.

7. This veiling should he worn by all Christian women, married or single.

In a number of Scripture references the words "woman” and “virgin” or “maid” are used interchangeably. Compare Matt. 1:23 with Gal. 4:4,

and Luke 22:56 with Luke 22:57. If both married and single women are submissive to the lesson which God through nature teaches (Vs. 14, 15), it follows that both married and single women should be submissive to the lesson which God through revelation teaches (Vs. 5, 6, 10).

8. Being a church ordinance, the Church should determine the form.

So far as I Cor. 11:2-16 is concerned, any form of the veil which is worn as a sign of devotion and woman's

rightful place in worship and Christian relationship, and recognized as such, will answer the purpose; provided the scriptural standard of order and submission are complied with. “Let all things be done decently and in order,” says Paul. It is but reasonable to suppose, therefore, that whatever the form the Church agrees upon, all members should cheerfully conform to. Two things, therefore, should be expected in determining what this covering should be: (1) a veiling as to fabric,

(2) Church sanction as to form.

9. This covering should he worn in all times of devotion.

“Every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoreth her head.” In the public service, in the family devotions, at the table, during times of Bible reading, in all times of devotion, that “sign” or “power” should be in evidence. This should be done, not merely because it is a church rule, for even where there is no rule like

that in the churches the Word of God still stands. While church rules should not be despised but reverenced, here is a scripture which is so very plain that no one should think of ever disobeying it. A conscientious and prayerful observance of this ordinance will bring many blessings that would otherwise be missed.

Let every reader turn to I Cor. 11:2-16, and after a careful and prayerful reading of the same resolve by God's grace to be obedient thereto until the

final summons to “come up higher” will render this “sign” no longer necessary.

The principle illustrated by head-covering is MODESTY and SUBMISSION . . . woman's beauty must NOT DISTRACT men during worship. In modern times this ordinance has taken on a different application, however.

1. PROHIBITION against the wearing of IMMODEST CLOTHING:

A woman should not wear IMMODEST CLOTHING in a PUBLIC PLACE, where there are other persons present beside her husband. The wearing of SEE-THROUGH, TRANSPARENT dresses, TIGHT JEANS or PANTS, FIGURE HUGGING SKIRTS or BLOUSES, SHORT MINI-SKIRTS can AROUSE or PROVOKE REPRODUCTIVE DESIRES and EMOTIONS in the surrounding males. However, it is not the function of these males to engage in any type of REPRODUCTIVE ACTS

with these WOMEN. A woman should therefore not dress PROVOCATIVELY in the presence of these men. Only in the PRIVACY of her home, with her own husband, can a woman dress PROVOCATIVELY, in order to engage in REPRODUCTIVE ACTS with her husband. Consider the following scriptures:

Mar 6:17 For Herod had sent soldiers to arrest and imprison John as a favor to Herodias. She had been his brother Philip's wife, but Herod had married her.

Mar 6:18 John kept telling Herod, "It is illegal for you to marry your brother's wife." Mar 6:19 Herodias was enraged and wanted John killed in revenge, but without Herod's approval she was powerless. Mar 6:20 And Herod respected John, knowing that he was a good and holy man, so he kept him under his protection. Herod was disturbed whenever he talked with John, but even so, he liked to listen to him. Mar 6:21 Herodias's chance finally came. It was Herod's birthday, and he gave a party for his palace aides,

army officers, and the leading citizens of Galilee. Mar 6:22 Then his daughter, also named Herodias, came in and performed a dance that greatly pleased them all. "Ask me for anything you like," the king said to the girl, "and I will give it to you." Mar 6:23 Then he promised, "I will give you whatever you ask, up to half of my kingdom!" Mar 6:24 She went out and asked her mother, "What should I ask for?" Her mother told her, "Ask for John the Baptist's head!" Mar 6:25 So the girl

hurried back to the king and told him, "I want the head of John the Baptist, right now, on a tray!" Mar 6:26 Then the king was very sorry, but he was embarrassed to break his oath in front of his guests. Mar 6:27 So he sent an executioner to the prison to cut off John's head and bring it to him. The soldier beheaded John in the prison, Mar 6:28 brought his head on a tray, and gave it to the girl, who took it to her mother. Mar 6:29 When John's disciples heard what had happened,

they came for his body and buried it in a tomb.

In the above scriptures, we can see that Herod was ENTHRALLED BY THE BEAUTY AND SEXUAL ALLURE OF HERODIAS. John the Baptist was a type of Elijah (see Matt 11:14). He also had to CONTEND with a king, who allowed his wife to HOLD THE REIGNS, and the reason was the same. Ahab, like Herod was also ENTHRALLED by the BEAUTY and SEXUAL FAVOURS of his wife, JEZEBEL. Herod was also

enthralled by the SEXY, PROVOCATIVE DANCING and IMMODEST DRESSING of his niece, also called Herodias, that he made an UNWISE OATH that led him to BEHEAD John the Baptist, someone that he liked to hear preach. Herodias, however (like Jezebel) wasn't impressed with John the Baptist, and wanted him BEHEADED (in the same way that Jezebel wanted Elijah BEHEADED). We can see from the above, that many woman don't take kindly to being told to DRESS

MODESTLY by preachers, and also that many men LIKE THEIR WIVES or FIANCES TO DRESS SEXILY in public, in order to ENHANCE THEIR STATUS and INFLUENCE among the males, and also to make other men envious and jealous of themselves (ALL DESPICABLE MOTIVES). Getting back to Jezebel, and Herodias: these two women were greatly IRRITATED that Elijah and John the Baptist were not similarly enthralled like all other men were, by their beauty. These women wanted to

CONTROL ALL MEN. They wanted to be the HEAD. Therefore they wanted these two men, Elijah and John the Baptist, BEHEADED. They resented men having any authority over them. They preferred men who were SUSCEPTIBLE TO INFLUENCE BY SEXUAL CHARM and ENTHRALMENTS. They RESENTED MEN that were ruled by RATIONAL LOGIC and the LAWS OF GOD, and were INSUSCEPTIBLE TO SEXUAL ENTHRALMENT and INFLUENCE.

Consider the following verses:

1Ti 2:9 And I want women to be modest in their appearance. They should wear decent and appropriate clothing and not draw attention to themselves by the way they fix their hair or by wearing gold or pearls or expensive clothes. 1Ti 2:10 For women who claim to be devoted to God should make themselves attractive by the good things they do. 1Ti 2:11 Women should listen and learn quietly and submissively. 1Ti 2:12 I do

not let women teach men or have authority over them. Let them listen quietly. 1Ti 2:13 For God made Adam first, and afterward he made Eve. 1Ti 2:14 And it was the woman, not Adam, who was deceived by Satan, and sin was the result. 1Ti 2:15 But women will be saved through childbearing and by continuing to live in faith, love, holiness, and modesty.

From the above, we note that Adam was NOT DECEIVED by Satan when he ate the fruit. Why then

did he eat the forbidden fruit? He was ENTHRALLED BY THE SEXUAL BEAUTY and CHARM of his wife (who was NAKED at this time - and of all woman, Eve was the MOST BEAUTIFUL - because she had the FULL COMPLEMENT (PRE-BABEL, PRE-INBREEDING, PRE-ETHNIC GENES) of genetic material, and was not produced by INBREEDING (POST-BABEL, POST-INBREEDING, POST-ETHNIC GENES) like other women, who have

only PARTIAL GENES, those peculiar only to their particular ETHNIC GROUP). Adam was so ENTHRALLED BY EVE'S BEAUTY and CHARM, that he simply COPIED HER BEHAVIOUR, OF EATING THE FORBIDDEN FRUIT, WITHOUT THINKING ABOUT WHAT HE WAS DOING. It was almost as though he had NO HEAD, NO BRAINS. Paul wanted to counter this EXTREME INFLUENCE that women can have over men, by legislating MODEST COVERING, covering the head, thereby

SYMBOLICALLY SUBMITTING to MAN'S AUTHORITY, and not trying, like Eve, and Jezebel and Herodias to use SEXUAL ENTHRALMENT and CHARM to INFLUENCE MEN.

2. PROHIBITION against the wearing of HIGH HEEL shoes:

Women should not wear HIGH HEEL shoes, in order to make their buttocks appear larger than

they really are. This violates the principle of:

(a) MODESTY:

Women do this in order to attract (or DISTRACT) the attention of men to themselves and away from God during church worship. This is WICKED BEHAVIOUR on the part of women .... to COMPETE WITH GOD for men's attention during worship.

1Ti 2:9 In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in MODEST APPAREL (shoes

included), with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;

1Pe 3:1 In the same way, you wives must accept the authority of your husbands, even those who refuse to accept the Good News. Your godly lives will speak to them better than any words. They will be won over 1Pe 3:2 by watching your pure, godly behavior. (In the same token, if muslim people come into a christian church, perhaps seeking God, if they see

women dressed in immodest clothing, they will conclude that Christianity is a false religion, and be turned away from God, and perhaps go to hell . . . all this because Christian women insist on wearing IMMODEST CLOTHING. see 1Cor. 8:9-13; 10:32,33)

1Pe 3:3 Don't be concerned about the outward beauty that depends on fancy hairstyles, expensive jewelry (wearing ear-rings, nose-rings), or beautiful clothes. 1Pe 3:4 You should be known for the beauty

that comes from within, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is so precious to God. 1Pe 3:5 That is the way the holy women of old made themselves beautiful. They trusted God and accepted the authority of their husbands (by dressing MODESTLY, and not trying to ATTRACT the ATTENTION of OTHER MEN by IMMODEST DRESSING or CHARMING SPEECH). 1Pe 3:6 For instance, Sarah obeyed her husband, Abraham, when she called him her master. You are her daughters

when you do what is right without fear of what your husbands might do. 1Pe 3:7 In the same way, you husbands must give honor to your wives. Treat her with understanding as you live together. She may be weaker than you are, but she is your equal partner in God's gift of new life. If you don't treat her as you should, your prayers will not be heard.

Exo 20:26 Neither shalt thou go up by steps unto mine altar, that thy NAKEDNESS BE NOT

DISCOVERED THEREON.

Gen 9:23 And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and COVERED THE NAKEDNESS of their father; and their faces were backward, and they SAW NOT their father's NAKEDNESS.

Exo 28:42 And thou shalt make them linen breeches to COVER THEIR NAKEDNESS; from the LOINS EVEN UNTO THE THIGHS THEY SHALL REACH: Exo 28:43 And

they shall be upon Aaron, and upon his sons, when they COME IN UNTO THE TABERNACLE OF THE CONGREGATION, or when they come near unto the altar TO MINISTER IN THE HOLY PLACE; that they BEAR NOT THEIR INIQUITY, and DIE: it shall be a statute for ever unto him and his seed after him.

Besides violating the principle of MODESTY, it also violates the principle of:

(b) HONESTY:

Exo 23:1 Thou shalt not raise a FALSE REPORT: put not thine hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness.

Mat 15:19 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, FALSE WITNESS, blasphemies:

Mat 19:18 He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not

steal, Thou shalt not bear FALSE WITNESS,...

In the above case, a women who wears high heels is bearing FALSE WITNESS that her buttocks are bigger than they really are.

And yet again, another principle is violated, viz. the principle of:

(c) SAFETY AND SECURITY:

When a woman wears high heel shoes, her movement is INHIBITED. If a small child is about to step onto a

busy street, the woman must be able, from a distance, to RUN QUICKLY towards the child to grab the child's arm and prevent the child from being knocked down.

Gen 4:9 Afterward the LORD asked Cain (the woman), "Where is your brother (child)? Where is Abel (the child)?" "I don't know!" Cain (the mother) retorted. "Am I supposed to keep track of him (the children) wherever he (they) goes (go)?"

From the above, we can see that it is woman's duty to

keep track of where little children are going, and to be their guardians. This job cannot be properly done, if the woman is wearing slow-moving, high heel shoes.

Again, in a busy shopping mall, the high-heeled woman might accidently step on the toes of a barefoot child or someone wearing sandals or someone with soft shoes, and cause SEVERE DAMAGE to the person's foot.

Deu 22:8 "Every new house you build must have a

barrier around the edge of its flat rooftop. That way you will not bring the guilt of bloodshed on your household if someone FALLS FROM THE ROOF.

The above scripture teaches that one must see what could go wrong and act in such a way as to PREVENT AN ACCIDENT OR INJURY. Wearing high heel shoes could result in a very SEVERE INJURY to a person who is stepped on, and so should not be worn.

Again, the wearing of high heel shoes violates the principle of:

(d) Not putting a STUMBLINGBLOCK in someone's path:

Rom 14:13 Let us not therefore judge one another anymore: but judge this rather, that no man put a STUMBLINGBLOCK or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.

The above scripture teaches that STUMBLING and FALLING is an UNDESIRABLE EVENT. In the case of a woman wearing high heel shoes,

however, the woman is ACTUALLY WEARING A STUMBLINGBLOCK.
Many of these woman that wear high heel shoes are very tall, thin and skinny. Should they be walking outside, in HIGH HEEL SHOES, in a very strong wind, the danger of being blown over over is a very strong possibility. Climbing stairs is another hazardous venture. FLAT HEELED shoes provide a more STABLE SURFACE and are more SAFER TO WEAR. Women have a MORAL RESPONSIBILITY to AVOID RECKLESS and

DANGEROUS BEHAVIOUR. Christ said that DELIBERATELY FALLING is RECKLESS BEHAVIOUR and ought to be AVOIDED. We TEMPT GOD when we engage in such RECKLESS BEHAVIOUR as DELIBERATELY FALLING or WALKING on an UNSTABLE SURFACE, and expect Him to PROTECT US under such circumstances. God does NOT CONDONE or ENDORSE RECKLESS BEHAVIOUR.

Luk 4:9 And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a PINNACLE (HIGH HEEL SHOES) of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence: Luk 4:10 For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee: Luk 4:11 And in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Luk 4:12 And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not TEMPT the Lord thy God. Yet another principle that

is violated, is the principle of:

(e) EXPRESSING DISSATISFACTION with the CREATOR'S HANDIWORK:

Isa 45:9 Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth. Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? or thy work, He hath no hands?

Gen 1:31 And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was

very GOOD. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

When a woman, wears HIGH HEEL SHOES, she is in fact EXPRESSING DISSATISFACTION with God for making her FLAT FOOTED. She feels that God should have made her with HIGH STILT LIKE HEELS. By wearing HIGH HEEL SHOES, she is in fact EXPRESSING DEFIANCE towards her Creator.

(f) EFFICIENCY AND TIME SAVING:

Eph 5:16 REDEEMING THE TIME, because the days are evil.

Col 4:5 Walk in wisdom (fast moving shoes) toward them that are without, REDEEMING THE TIME.

By wearing high heel shoes, women walk around much more SLOWLY than if they were wearing takkies or sports shoes. This results in considerable TIME WASTING. This constitutes a violation of the command to REDEEM

THE TIME. By wearing takkies or sport shoes, a women can complete the shopping tasks MUCH FASTER (thereby REDEEMING THE TIME) and get home sooner, and thus have more time for Bible reading, personal praise and worship, and prayer. As the scripture says:

Luk 10:38 Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. Luk 10:39 And she

had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word. Luk 10:40 But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. Luk 10:41 And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things (wearing high heel shoes, applying lipstick, powdering the nose, painting the eyelashes, toenails and fingernails,

putting on earrings, etc): Luk 10:42 But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

3. PROHIBITION against the wearing of lipstick.

Christian women should not wear lipstick for the following reasons:

It violates the principle of:

(a) HONESTY:

By wearing lipstick, a woman is sending a

DISHONEST message to ALL MEN that she encounters, that she is ATTRACTED TO THEM. The reasoning behind wearing lipstick is to send a message to men that the woman is HIGHLY EXCITED at the presence of the man. This causes her blood to flow more quickly, which results in her lips appearing redder than normal. This supposedly causes men who see this redder-than-normal lips to be attracted to the women with redder-than-normal lips. However, it is highly unlikely that the woman is

ATTRACTED TO EVERY MAN that she sees. Some of the men that she encounters, she probably regards as LOATHSOME or REPULSIVE. In such a case she is sending a FALSE SIGNAL, one of ATTRACTION, whereas there is REPULSIVENESS or LACK OF INTEREST. In such a case, the woman is BEARING FALSE WITNESS. A man may act on this FALSE SIGNAL, and ask a woman out on a date, erroneously thinking that she is attracted to him, when in fact she is not. This woman will now

rebuff the man's advances. This will result in the man feeling emotionally wounded and hurt, with a damaged self-esteem. This could result in the man not being interested in any woman (because he is fearful of being rejected again), which could result in him being unmarried and childless for the rest of his life .... and all because some 'Christian' woman insisted on sending false signals by wearing lipstick. Moreover, The man's mother may BEAR GRUDGES against this woman that hurt her son's

heart. Both the man, and his mother may BEAR GRUDGES and HARBOUR UNFORGIVENESS against the woman, thus resulting in them both going to hell. This, we call violating the principle of:

(b) not putting a STUMBLINGBLOCK before the blind:

Lev 19:14 Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a STUMBLINGBLOCK before the BLIND, but shalt fear thy God: I am the LORD.

So, we can see how much evil can result from SENDING FALSE SIGNALS via LIPSTICK WEARING, which BLINDS a person, and CAUSES them to STUMBLE.

Exo 23:1 Thou shalt not raise a FALSE REPORT: put not thine hand with the wicked to be an UNRIGHTEOUS WITNESS.

Mat 15:19 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, FALSE WITNESS, blasphemies:

Mat 19:18 He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear FALSE WITNESS,.

Again, the wearing of lipstick violates the principle of:

(c) HEALTH:

Lipstick contains POISONOUS SUBSTANCES which are ABSORBED THROUGH THE THIN SKIN and ACCUMULATE within the

body, causing such AUTOIMMUNE diseases as lupus, general weakness, allergies, cancer etc. This impairs the woman's ability to perform the functions that she as a woman is supposed to perform, domestic duties, marital duties, motherly duties etc.

Lev 10:9 Do not drink wine nor strong drink (ALCOHOL which is a TOXIN), thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: it shall be a statute forever

throughout your generations:

Lev 10:10 And that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean (POISONOUS/ TOXIC/ HARMFUL) and clean (NON-TOXIC/NON-POISONOUS/ NON-HARMFUL);

Lev 11:9 These shall ye eat of all that are in the waters: whatsoever hath fins and scales in the waters, in the seas, and in the rivers, them shall ye eat. Lev 11:10 And all that have not fins and scales in the seas (crab,

prawns, and all shellfish), and in the rivers, of all that move in the waters, and of any living thing which is in the waters, they shall be an abomination unto you: Lev 11:11 They shall be even an abomination unto you; ye shall not eat of their flesh, but ye shall have their carcases in abomination. Lev 11:12 Whatsoever hath no fins nor scales in the waters, that shall be an abomination unto you.

The reason for the above prohibition, is that shellfish ACCUMULATES POISONS such as mercury,

lead, and other TOXIC SUBSTANCES that are dumped into the ocean. These poisons WEAKEN THE BODY of the person who eats them. In the same manner, lipstick should be regarded as an abomination, because it contains poisons that weaken and impair the optimum functioning of the human body.

Again, wearing lipstick violates the principle of:

(d) ABSTAINING FROM THE APPEARANCE OF EVIL.:

1Th 5:22 Abstain from all appearance of evil.

When a woman wears lipstick around other womans' husbands, these woman FEEL THREATENED. They think that this lipstick wearing woman is trying to attract the attention of their husbands, and they regard this as husband stealing or attempted-husband stealing (or attempted adultery). Even if the lipstick wearing woman is

not interested in these other womans' husbands, nevertheless she is sending MIXED SIGNALS, which can cause ANIMOSITY between women.

Heb 12:13 And make STRAIGHT (not CROOKED/ MIXED) PATHS for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed. Heb 12:14 Follow PEACE WITH ALL MEN (WOMEN INCLUDED), and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: Heb 12:15 Looking diligently

lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any ROOT OF BITTERNESS springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;

Again wearing lipstick violates the principle of:

(e) REJECTING SINS and LUSTS, and REJECTING SILLINESS:

2Ti 3:6 For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive SILLY women laden with sins, LED AWAY with DIVERS LUSTS,

In the above case, the woman are led away by an extreme lust for men's attention.

Again, wearing lipstick, violates the principle of:

(f) NON-SELFISH USAGE OF MONEY:

A woman should use her money to buy healthy food for her husband and children (and/ or parents). If she has excess money, however, she should buy food for the poor and starving, or buy Bibles to hand out to the unsaved.

Spending money on non-essential VANITY items, constitutes a SELFISH, and UNCHRISTIAN use of money.

May the Lord help us to be obedient in all things. The Lord showed me a lesson one day regarding true and false prophecies. TRUE PROPHETS very often prophecy FALSE PROPHECIES. He used 3 CONSECUTIVE NUMBERS to show me the lesson viz.: 11, 12 and 13.

[Let me just digress a bit, though. There are 39 books in the Old Testament. 39 is 3 x 13. In the Bible 13 is the number representing REBELLION. What is the the CENTRAL THEME of the OLD TESTAMENT? It will be found in the 13th verse of the 13th chapter of the 13th book in the Bible. i.e.:

1 Chronicles 13:13

1Ch 13:13 So David brought not the ark home to himself to the city of David, but

carried it aside into the house of Obededom the Gittite.

So we see that the CENTRAL THEME of the OLD TESTAMENT is MAN'S ESTRANGEMENT from GOD, because of SIN and IRREVERENCE.

In the NEW TESTAMENT, of course, the CENTRAL THEME, is MAN'S RE-UNIFICATION, or RECONCILIATION with GOD, through the ATONING SACRIFICE OF

CHRIST, who is EMMANUEL, GOD WITH US.]

Now, back to what I was talking about, previous to the digression: 3 consecutive numbers viz.: 11, 12 and 13.

Number 11 is the number of 'the preparing to be'. Number 12 is the number of the TRUE and CHOSEN. Number 13 is the number of the FALSE and REBELLIOUS. First He said, we will use each of the numbers TWICE.

Using 13 twice:

13 times 2 equals 26.

What is the 26th book of the Bible? Answer: Ezekiel.

Turn to the 13th chapter of Ezekiel.

Using 11 twice:

11 times 2 equals 22.

Go to the 22nd verse of Ezekiel 13:22. What does it read?

Ezekiel 13:22

Eze 13:22 Because with lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad; and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should

not return from his wicked way, by promising him life:

The above verse is the teaching regarding the TRUE PROPHET/ PROPHETESS who prophecies FALSE PROPHECIES. What this simply means is that, the prophet very often prophecies under the UNCTION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, but now and then prophecies from some OTHER INFLUENCE. Why is this the case? We will now use the number 12 twice to find out why.

Samuel was the prophet that anointed the first 2 kings of Israel. He also wrote 2 books.

The 12th chapters of both books (viz 1Samuel 12 and 2Samuel 12 teach us the lesson about the INTEGRITY of a PROPHET...which is what makes a PROPHET a CHOSEN PROPHET.)

Let us turn to the 12th chapter of 1 Samuel.

1 Samuel 12:

1Sa 12:3 Behold, here I am: witness against me before the LORD, and before his

anointed: WHOSE OX HAVE I TAKEN? or WHOSE ASS HAVE I TAKEN? or WHOM HAVE I DEFRAUDED? WHOM HAVE I OPPRESSED? or of whose hand have I RECEIVED ANY BRIBE to BLIND MINE EYES THEREWITH? and I will restore it you. 1Sa 12:4 And they said, Thou hast NOT DEFRAUDED US, nor OPPRESSED US, neither hast thou TAKEN OUGHT OF ANY MAN'S HAND. 1Sa 12:5 And he said unto them, The LORD is witness against you, and his anointed is witness this

day, that YE HAVE NOT FOUND OUGHT IN MY HAND. And they answered, He is witness.

Samuel was a prophet that had PERFECT INTEGRITY in His CHARACTER. This was the reason that the scripture says that God did not allow any of his words fall to the ground.

1Sa 3:19 And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him, and did let NONE OF HIS WORDS FALL TO THE GROUND. 1Sa 3:20 And all Israel from Dan even to Beersheba knew that Samuel was

established to be a prophet of the LORD.

The implication is that there were prophets (TRUE PROPHETS called to the prophetic office) whose words God did ALLOW to FALL TO THE GROUND. In other words these were TRUE PROPHETS who PROPHESIED FALSELY. This happened because of a FAILURE in their CHARACTER. With Eli, he FAILED TO DISCIPLINE his sons because he HONOURED men MORE THAN he honoured God. As the scriptures say:

1Sa 3:11 And the LORD said to Samuel, Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle. 1Sa 3:12 In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house: when I begin, I will also make an end. 1Sa 3:13 For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the INIQUITY WHICH HE KNOWETH; because his sons MADE THEMSELVES VILE, and he RESTRAINED THEM NOT. 1Sa 3:14 And therefore I have sworn

unto the house of Eli, that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering for ever.

And again the scripture saith:

1Sa 2:12 Now the sons of Eli were sons of Belial; they knew not the LORD. 1Sa 2:13 And the priests' custom with the people was, that, when any man offered sacrifice, the priest's servant came, while the flesh was in seething, with a fleshhook of three teeth in his hand; 1Sa 2:14 And he struck it into

the pan, or kettle, or caldron, or pot; all that the fleshhook brought up the priest took for himself. So they did in Shiloh unto all the Israelites that came thither. 1Sa 2:15 Also before they burnt the fat, the priest's servant came, and said to the man that sacrificed, Give flesh to roast for the priest; for he will not have sodden flesh of thee, but raw. 1Sa 2:16 And if any man said unto him, Let them not fail to burn the fat presently, and then take as much as thy soul desireth; then he would answer him, Nay;

but thou shalt give it me now: and if not, I will take it by force. 1Sa 2:17 Wherefore the sin of the young men was very great before the LORD: for men abhorred the offering of the LORD.

Because of the priests' COVETOUS and IRREVERANT attitude (Hophni and Phinehas), GOD'S NAME was highly DISHONOURED and REVILED. Again, this constituted a LACK IN INTEGRITY and a general FAILURE IN CHARACTER.

We now deal with the 2nd 12, 2 Samuel 12:

2Sa 12:1 And the LORD sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor. 2Sa 12:2 The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds: 2Sa 12:3 But the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and

lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. 2Sa 12:4 And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he SPARED TO TAKE OF HIS OWN FLOCK and of his OWN HERD, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but TOOK THE POOR MAN'S LAMB, and dressed it for the man that was come to him. 2Sa 12:5 And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the LORD liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die: 2Sa 12:6 And he shall

restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because HE HAD NO PITY. 2Sa 12:7 And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul; 2Sa 12:8 And I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things. 2Sa 12:9 Wherefore hast thou DESPISED THE

COMMANDMENT OF THE LORD, to DO EVIL IN HIS SIGHT? thou hast KILLED Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast TAKEN HIS WIFE TO BE THY WIFE, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon. 2Sa 12:10 Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou HAST DESPISED ME, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife.

We note here that one prophet is REBUKING another prophet. David

himself was a prophet, and many of the PROPHETIC PSALMS were written by him. Unfortunately, he did not have a perfect record. We read here of his shortcoming, the STEALING of someone else's wife. This represents a LACK OF INTEGRITY and a SHORTCOMING in his CHARACTER. In the above case, David was INACTIVE and FAILED TO MEDITATE in the WORD of GOD. He failed to follow his own advice:

Psa 119:9 Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse

his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word. Psa 119:10 With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments. Psa 119:11 Thy word have I HID IN MINE HEART, that I might not sin against thee. Psa 119:12 Blessed art thou, O LORD: teach me thy statutes. Psa 119:13 WITH MY LIPS have I DECLARED ALL THE JUDGEMENTS OF THY MOUTH. Psa 119:14 I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as much as in all riches. Psa 119:15 I

will MEDITATE IN THY PRECEPTS, and have respect unto thy ways. Psa 119:16 I will delight myself in thy statutes: I WILL NOT FORGET THY WORD.

And again, he was INACTIVE and was taking a break from MEDITATING IN GOD'S WORD.

2Sa 11:1 And it came to pass, after the year was expired, at the time when KINGS GO FORTH TO BATTLE, that David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel; and

they destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah. But David TARRIED STILL AT JERUSALEM. 2Sa 11:2 And it came to pass IN AN EVENINGTIDE, that David AROSE FROM OFF HIS BED, and WALKED UPON THE ROOF OF THE KING'S HOUSE: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon. 2Sa 11:3 And David sent and enquired after the woman. And one said, Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?

The Chronicles account gives us more information:

1Ch 20:1 And it came to pass, that after the year was expired, at the time that kings go out to battle, Joab led forth the power of the army, and wasted the country of the children of Ammon, and came and besieged Rabbah. But DAVID TARRIED AT JERUSALEM. And Joab smote Rabbah, and destroyed it. 1Ch 20:2 And David TOOK THE CROWN OF THEIR KING FROM OFF HIS HEAD, and found it to weigh a talent of gold,

and there were precious stones in it; and it was SET UPON DAVID'S HEAD: and he BROUGHT ALSO EXCEEDING MUCH SPOIL OUT OF THE CITY. 1Ch 20:3 And he brought out the people that were in it, and CUT THEM WITH SAWS, and with HARROWS OF IRON, and WITH AXES. Even so dealt David with all the cities of the children of Ammon. And David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.

We note here David's FAILURES IN CHARACTER:

1) Sloth – he was sleeping in bed the whole day, and only got out of bed in the late afternoon. (NEGLECT OF DUTY, IDLENESS and SLOTH)

2) Did not PROTECT HIMSELF FROM TEMPTATION by keeping his boundaries:

– Most of the men were gone to war, and David was amongst the women, in temptation.

- walked on the roof, where he had a vantage point, and AERIAL VIEW of all the houses below him (the king's house had the highest roof). David should have anticipated that from this vantage point, he might see a naked woman, and be tempted (LUST OF THE EYES).

3) Adultery - As soon as the messenger said, 'WIFE of URIAH', David should have left of. Instead he had the woman BROUGHT CLOSE TO HIM in the palace ... and this led to

SEXUAL GRATIFICATION (LUST OF THE FLESH)

4) Seeking more and more POWER and GLORY for Himself (PRIDE OF LIFE):

David took the CROWN of the other King's head and placed it on his own head.

We should not take pleasure in dethroning other people and taking their place. David already had his AREA OF RULE. He should not have sought to extend his domain beyond what God had given.

5) Greed – David LOOTED the Ammonites. This was just after he had committed adultery with Bathsheba, and had had Uriah killed. (LUST OF THE EYES)

6) Cruelty – cutting people with saws and irons and axes is CRUEL behaviour, and should not be resorted to. The Ammonites had DISGRACED David's messengers and GREATLY SHAMED them. David had never forgiven this. The reason for this battle was to revenge the children of Ammon. Unfortunately it

was this battle that led to the occasion of David's sin.

2Sa 10:1 And it came to pass after this, that the king of the children of Ammon died, and Hanun his son reigned in his stead. 2Sa 10:2 Then said David, I will SHEW KINDNESS unto Hanun the son of Nahash, as his father shewed kindness unto me. And David sent to comfort him by the hand of his servants for his father. And David's servants came into the land of the children of Ammon. 2Sa 10:3 And the princes of the

children of Ammon said unto Hanun their lord, Thinkest thou that David doth honour thy father, that he hath sent comforters unto thee? hath not David rather sent his servants unto thee, to search the city, and to spy it out, and to overthrow it? 2Sa 10:4 Wherefore Hanun took David's servants, and shaved off the one half of their beards, and cut off their garments in the middle, even to their buttocks, and sent them away. 2Sa 10:5 When they told it unto David, he sent to meet them, because the

men were greatly ashamed: and the king said, Tarry at Jericho until your beards be grown, and then return. 2Sa 10:6 And when the children of Ammon saw that they stank before David, the children of Ammon sent and hired the Syrians of Bethrehob, and the Syrians of Zoba, twenty thousand footmen, and of king Maacah a thousand men, and of Ishtob twelve thousand men. 2Sa 10:7 And when David heard of it, he sent Joab, and all the host of the mighty men.

David had tried to SHOW KINDNESS to the Ammonites, but KINDNESS did not work, therefore David had decided to become CRUEL. We must never allow other people's cruel behaviour towards us, to cause us to change our OWN GOOD BEHAVIOUR of KINDNESS and SYMPATHY. As the scripture says:

Rom 12:17 Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. Rom 12:18 If it be possible, as

much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Rom 12:19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Rom 12:20 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Rom 12:21 BE NOT OVERCOME OF EVIL, but OVERCOME EVIL WITH GOOD. (REVENGE)

From all of the above considerations, we note that very often TRUE PROPHETS deliver FALSE PROPHECIES due to a SHORTCOMING IN CHARACTER. Here are more scriptures to confirm this.

Eze 14:1 Then came certain of the elders of Israel unto me, and sat before me. Eze 14:2 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Eze 14:3 Son of man, these men have SET UP THEIR IDOLS IN THEIR HEART, and PUT the STUMBLINGBLOCK of

THEIR INIQUITY BEFORE THEIR FACE: should I be enquired of at all by them? Eze 14:4 Therefore speak unto them, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Every man of the house of Israel that setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet; I the LORD will ANSWER HIM THAT COMETH ACCORDING TO THE MULTITUDE OF HIS IDOLS; Eze 14:5 That I may take the house of Israel in their own heart,

because they are ALL ESTRANGED FROM ME THROUGH THEIR IDOLS. Eze 14:6 Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Repent, and turn yourselves from your idols; and turn away your faces from all your abominations. Eze 14:7 For every one of the house of Israel, or of the stranger that sojourneth in Israel, which separateth himself from me, and setteth up his idols in his heart, and PUTTETH THE STUMBLINGBLOCK OF HIS INIQUITY BEFORE

HIS FACE, and cometh to a prophet to enquire of him concerning me; I the LORD will answer him by myself: Eze 14:8 And I will set my face against that man, and will make him a sign and a proverb, and I will cut him off from the midst of my people; and ye shall know that I am the LORD. Eze 14:9 And if the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I the LORD HAVE DECEIVED THAT PROPHET, and I will stretch out my hand upon him, and will destroy him from the midst of my

people Israel. Eze 14:10 And they shall bear the punishment of their iniquity: the punishment of the prophet shall be even as the punishment of him that seeketh unto him; Eze 14:11 That the house of Israel may go no more astray from me, neither be polluted any more with all their transgressions; but that they may be my people, and I may be their God, saith the Lord GOD.

So we have above, the clear teaching that God Himself can deceive a prophet. Here are some more

examples of God deceiving prophets because of SHORTCOMINGS IN CHARACTER, either their own, or the people that seek a prophecy of them.

1Ki 22:5 And Jehoshaphat said unto the king of Israel, Enquire, I pray thee, at the word of the LORD to day. 1Ki 22:6 Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, about four hundred men, and said unto them, Shall I go against Ramothgilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And they said, Go up; for the Lord shall deliver it

into the hand of the king. (THIS IS A LIE, BUT AHAB did not DESERVE TO BE TOLD THE TRUTH, because he himself HATED the TRUTH) 1Ki 22:7 And Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the LORD besides, that we might enquire of him? 1Ki 22:8 And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, There is yet one man, Micaiah the son of Imlah, by whom we may enquire of the LORD: but I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil. And

Jehoshaphat said, Let not the king say so. 1Ki 22:9 Then the king of Israel called an officer, and said, Hasten hither Micaiah the son of Imlah. 1Ki 22:10 And the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah sat each on his throne, having put on their robes, in a void place in the entrance of the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets prophesied before them. 1Ki 22:11 And Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah made him horns of iron: and he said, Thus saith the LORD, With these shalt thou push the

Syrians, until thou have consumed them (HERE WE HAVE ANOTHER TYPICAL FALSE PROPHECY from a TRUE PROPHET called into the PROPHETIC OFFICE by God Himself). 1Ki 22:12 And all the prophets prophesied so, saying, Go up to Ramothgilead, and prosper: for the LORD shall deliver it into the king's hand. 1Ki 22:13 And the messenger that was gone to call Micaiah spake unto him, saying, Behold now, the words of the prophets declare good unto the king with one mouth:

let thy word, I pray thee, be like the word of one of them, and speak that which is good. 1Ki 22:14 And Micaiah said, As the LORD liveth, what the LORD saith unto me, that will I speak. 1Ki 22:15 So he came to the king. And the king said unto him, Micaiah, shall we go against Ramothgilead to battle, or shall we forbear? And he answered him, Go, and prosper: for the LORD shall deliver it into the hand of the king. 1Ki 22:16 And the king said unto him, How many times shall I adjure thee that

thou tell me nothing but that which is true in the name of the LORD? 1Ki 22:17 And he said, I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills, as sheep that have not a shepherd: and the LORD said, These have no master: let them return every man to his house in peace. 1Ki 22:18 And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, Did I not tell thee that he would prophesy no good concerning me, but evil? 1Ki 22:19 And he said, Hear thou therefore the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, and all the host of

heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left. 1Ki 22:20 And the LORD said, Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramothgilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner. 1Ki 22:21 And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the LORD, and said, I will persuade him. 1Ki 22:22 And the LORD said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I WILL PUT A LYING SPIRIT IN THE MOUTH OF ALL HIS PROPHETS.

And he said, Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also: go forth, and do so (GOD HIMSELF IS COMISSIONING THE FALSE PROPHECY). 1Ki 22:23 Now therefore, behold, the LORD hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the LORD hath spoken evil concerning thee. 1Ki 22:24 But Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah went near, and smote Micaiah on the cheek, and said, WHICH WAY WENT THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD FROM ME TO SPEAK UNTO THEE? 1Ki 22:25 And

Micaiah said, Behold, thou shalt see in that day, when thou shalt go into an inner chamber to hide thyself. 1Ki 22:26 And the king of Israel said, Take Micaiah, and carry him back unto Amon the governor of the city, and to Joash the king's son; 1Ki 22:27 And say, Thus saith the king, Put this fellow in the prison, and feed him with bread of affliction and with water of affliction, until I come in peace. 1Ki 22:28 And Micaiah said, If thou return at all in peace, the LORD hath not spoken by me. And he said,

Hearken, O people, every one of you. (LIKE SAMUEL BEFORE HIM, GOD DID NOT ALLOW MICAIAH'S WORDS TO FALL TO THE GROUND, because unlike the other prophets, Micaiah REFUSED TO COMPROMISE the INTEGRITY OF HIS CHARACTER.)

Micaiah FEARED GOD above all else, and did not fear the WRATH of the king. Micaiah was a number 12, not a number 13 like the other prophets. Remember 12 means OBEDIENT and therefore

CHOSEN. 13 means DISOBEDIENT, and therefore REBELLIOUS. Many number 12's, because of their behaviour, become number 13's. Let's look at another 13th chapter.

1 Kings 13

1Ki 13:1 And, behold, there came a man of God out of Judah by the word of the LORD unto Bethel: and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense. 1Ki 13:2 And he cried against the altar in the word of the LORD, and said, O altar, altar, thus saith the LORD; Behold, a child shall be

born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee. 1Ki 13:3 And he gave a sign the same day, saying, This is the sign which the LORD hath spoken; Behold, the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that are upon it shall be poured out. 1Ki 13:4 And it came to pass, when king Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, which had cried against the altar in Bethel, that he put forth his hand

from the altar, saying, Lay hold on him. And his hand, which he put forth against him, dried up, so that he could not pull it in again to him. 1Ki 13:5 The altar also was rent, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the LORD. 1Ki 13:6 And the king answered and said unto the man of God, Intreat now the face of the LORD thy God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored me again. And the man of God besought the LORD, and the king's

hand was restored him again, and became as it was before. 1Ki 13:7 And the king said unto the man of God, Come home with me, and refresh thyself, and I will give thee a reward. (THIS NOW IS THE OFFERING OF A BRIBE, JEROBOAM IS TRYING TO PACIFY THE JUDGEMENT ... WITHOUT REPENTING) 1Ki 13:8 And the man of God said unto the king, If thou wilt give me half thine house, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place: 1Ki 13:9 For so

was it charged me by the word of the LORD, saying, Eat no bread, nor drink water, nor turn again by the same way that thou camest. 1Ki 13:10 So he went another way, and returned not by the way that he came to Bethel. 1Ki 13:11 Now there dwelt an old prophet in Bethel; and his sons came and told him all the works that the man of God had done that day in Bethel: the words which he had spoken unto the king, them they told also to their father. 1Ki 13:12 And their father said unto them, What way went he? For his

sons had seen what way the man of God went, which came from Judah. 1Ki 13:13 And he said unto his sons, Saddle me the ass. So they saddled him the ass: and he rode thereon, 1Ki 13:14 And went after the man of God, and found him sitting under an oak: and he said unto him, Art thou the man of God that camest from Judah? And he said, I am. 1Ki 13:15 Then he said unto him, Come home with me, and eat bread. 1Ki 13:16 And he said, I may not return with thee, nor go in with thee: neither will I eat bread nor drink water

with thee in this place: 1Ki 13:17 For it was said to me by the word of the LORD, Thou shalt eat no bread nor drink water there, nor turn again to go by the way that thou camest. 1Ki 13:18 He said unto him, I am a prophet also as thou art; and an angel spake unto me by the word of the LORD, saying, Bring him back with thee into thine house, that he may eat bread and drink water. But he LIED UNTO HIM. 1Ki 13:19 So he went back with him, and did eat bread in his house, and drank water. 1Ki 13:20 And it

came to pass, as they sat at the table, that the word of the LORD came unto the prophet that brought him back: 1Ki 13:21 And he cried unto the man of God that came from Judah, saying, Thus saith the LORD, Forasmuch as thou hast DISOBEYED the mouth of the LORD, and hast NOT KEPT THE COMMANDMENT WHICH THE LORD THY GOD COMMANDED, 1Ki 13:22 But camest back, and hast eaten bread and drunk water in the place, of the which the LORD did say to thee, Eat no bread,

and drink no water; thy carcase shall not come unto the sepulchre of thy fathers. 1Ki 13:23 And it came to pass, after he had eaten bread, and after he had drunk, that he saddled for him the ass, to wit, for the prophet whom he had brought back. 1Ki 13:24 And when he was gone, a lion met him by the way, and slew him: and his carcase was cast in the way, and the ass stood by it, the lion also stood by the carcase. 1Ki 13:25 And, behold, men passed by, and saw the carcase cast in the way, and the lion standing

by the carcase: and they came and told it in the city where the old prophet dwelt. 1Ki 13:26 And when the prophet that brought him back from the way heard thereof, he said, It is the man of God, who was disobedient unto the word of the LORD: therefore the LORD hath delivered him unto the lion, which hath torn him, and slain him, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake unto him. 1Ki 13:27 And he spake to his sons, saying, Saddle me the ass. And they saddled him. 1Ki 13:28 And he went and

found his carcase cast in the way, and the ass and the lion standing by the carcase: the lion had not eaten the carcase, nor torn the ass. 1Ki 13:29 And the prophet took up the carcase of the man of God, and laid it upon the ass, and brought it back: and the old prophet came to the city, to mourn and to bury him. 1Ki 13:30 And he laid his carcase in his own grave; and they mourned over him, saying, Alas, my brother!

Now we note from the above that it is very

IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND THE REASON for a command of God, so that we may not be EASILY DUPED. The man of God above was a PROPHET OF JUDGEMENT. As such, he was not allowed to engage in any FRIENDSHIP or CONCILIATORY behaviours, such as meeting with anybody, or accepting any type of hospitality. His ACTIONS had to REFLECT his type of MESSAGE. He was told to go back another way so that nobody could track his movements and become

friends with him. Unfortunately this old prophet was looking for some type of company with a fellow prophet. He was SELFISH. Instead of allowing the man of God to go his way, he wanted the COMPANY of the man of God ABOVE ALL ELSE. In order to be a FAITHFUL GOSPEL MINISTER, one must be very wary of allowing oneself to come under the INFLUENCE of the PERSONS THAT ONE HAS TO DELIVER A CORRECTIVE WORD TO. Once a person accepts any type HUMAN

INTERACTION, the HUMAN INTERACTION can CONFUSE or CAST DOUBT on the word of God that has been received. It is CONFUSING when one is hearing MANY VOICES all GIVING CONTRADICTORY INSTRUCTIONS, and all claiming to COME FROM GOD. This man of God should not have been SO BELIEVING. He should have taken the time to EVALUATE, and ask questions. Why would God suddenly CHANGE THE INSTRUCTIONS? Was he being TESTED like

Abraham, where the INSTRUCTIONS were suddenly changed? (Gen 22:2 & Gen 22:12). He was being TESTED, but in a slightly DIFFERENT way from Abraham. God ALLOWED these circumstances to take place, because this prophet was being TESTED FOR OBEDIENCE. I believe that He was COMMITTED to OBEY GOD, but he was TOO NAÏVE. He believed every spirit. He did realize that there were many FALSE SPIRITS out there. He should have been BUSY EVALUATING and

TESTING, rather than just BELIEVING EVERYTHING.

2Co11:13 For such are FALSE apostles, DECEITFUL workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.
2Co 11:26 In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among FALSE BRETHREN;

Gal2:4 And that because of FALSE BRETHREN unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: 2Pe2:1 But there were FALSE PROPHETS also among the people, even as there shall be FALSE TEACHERS among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. 1Jn 4:1 Beloved, BELIEVE not every spirit, but TRY THE

SPIRITS whether they are OF GOD: because MANY FALSE PROPHETS are gone out into the world. Rev 16:13 And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the FALSE PROPHET.

He FAILED to EVALUATE if this really was the VOICE of God that he was hearing. ALL PROPHETS are OPEN to the INFLUENCE of the HOLY SPIRIT, DEMON SPIRITS, as well as

HUMAN SPIRITS. Only the Holy Spirit speaks the TRUTH ALL THE TIME. DEMON SPIRITS, as well as HUMANS are capable of LIES and FALSEHOOD. The man of God should have TRUSTED the WORD OF GOD that he had received. It was CONFIRMED BY MIRACLES. We cannot afford to be NAÏVE. Even PERSONS in a POSITION OF TRUST, like what this old prophet was, can LIE, or be DECEIVED by others (either HUMANS or DEMONS). One has to be absolutely sure of the

SOURCE. Nehemiah, because he looked at what the results of believing a so-called prophecy was, could tell if it was TRUE or FALSE.

Conspiracy Against Nehemiah

Neh 6:1 Now it came to pass, when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and Geshem the Arabian, and the rest of our enemies, heard that I had builded the wall, and that there was no breach left therein; (though at that time I had not set up the doors upon the gates;) Neh 6:2 That Sanballat and

Geshem sent unto me, saying, Come, let us meet together in some one of the villages in the plain of Ono. But they thought to do me mischief. Neh 6:3 And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you? Neh 6:4 Yet they sent unto me four times after this sort; and I answered them after the same manner. Neh 6:5 Then sent Sanballat his servant unto me in like manner the fifth time with an open letter in

his hand; Neh 6:6 Wherein was written, It is reported among the heathen, and Gashmu saith it, that thou and the Jews think to rebel: for which cause thou buildest the wall, that thou mayest be their king, according to these words. Neh 6:7 And thou hast also appointed prophets to preach of thee at Jerusalem, saying, There is a king in Judah: and now shall it be reported to the king according to these words. Come now therefore, and let us take counsel together. Neh 6:8 Then I sent unto him,

saying, There are no such things done as thou sayest, but thou FEIGNEST THEM OUT OF THINE OWN HEART. Neh 6:9 For they all MADE US AFRAID, saying, THEIR HANDS SHALL BE WEAKENED FROM THE WORK, that it be not done. Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands. Neh 6:10 Afterward I came unto the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah the son of Mehetabeel, who was shut up; and he said, Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple, and let us shut the doors of

the temple: for they will come to slay thee; yea, in the night will they come to slay thee. Neh 6:11 And I said, Should such a man as I flee? and who is there, that, being as I am, would go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in. Neh 6:12 And, lo, I PERCEIVED THAT GOD HAD NOT SENT HIM; but that he PRONOUNCED THIS PROPHECY AGAINST ME: for Tobiah and Sanballat HAD HIRED HIM. Neh 6:13 Therefore was he hired, THAT I SHOULD BE AFRAID, and do so, AND SIN, and that

they might have MATTER FOR AN EVIL REPORT, that they might REPROACH ME. Neh 6:14 My God, think thou upon Tobiah and Sanballat according to these their works, and on the PROPHETESS NOADIAH, and the REST OF THE PROPHETS, that would have PUT ME IN FEAR.

The reason Nehemiah did well was that he REALIZED that there would always be OPPOSITION to the TYPE OF WORK that he was doing. Tobiah and

Sanballat were themselves, PUPPETS OF THE DEVIL. The man of God mentioned in 1Kings 13, should have REALIZED that there were would be people that would try to BRING HIM DOWN or at least try to CONTROL Him. PROPHETS or any GOSPEL WORKER, must be very WARY of being CONTROLLED or INFLUENCED by WELL-MEANING FRIENDS (like Peter Matt 16:23), or MALICIOUS ENEMIES, especially demons that are OPPOSED to GOD'S WORK.

Let us summarize the CHARACTER FAILINGS that we have encountered so far:

1) SLOTH, IDLENESS, NEGLECT OF DUTY,

2) STUMBLING BLOCKS

3) SEXUAL SINS.

4) PRIDE, VANITY, and VAINGLORY.

5) GREED and COVETOUSNESS.

6) UNFORGIVENESS.

7) GULLIBILITY, INABILITY or UNWILLINGNESS to

EVALUATE or TEST the spirits

Before we go into a brief description of each CHARACTER FAILING above, I just want to deal with a brief teaching from the OLD TESTAMENT that deals with how to COMBAT the ABOVE character failings. Consider the following verses:

Jos 1:8 This book of the law shall NOT DEPART OUT OF THY MOUTH; but thou shalt MEDITATE THEREIN DAY and

NIGHT, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

Psa 45:1 To the chief Musician upon Shoshannim, for the sons of Korah, Maschil, A Song of loves. My heart is inditing a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching the king: MY TONGUE IS THE PEN OF A READY WRITER.

Pro 4:20 My son, ATTEND TO MY WORDS; INCLINE THINE EAR UNTO MY SAYINGS. Pro 4:21 Let them not depart from thine eyes; KEEP THEM IN THE MIDST OF THINE HEART. Pro 4:22 For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh. Pro 4:23 Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.

Psa 119:9 Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto ACCORDING TO THY WORD.

Psa 119:15 I will MEDITATE IN THY PRECEPTS, and have respect unto thy ways.

From the above verses, we can see that the scripture method of STRENGTHENING ONE'S WILL-POWER is to SPEAK OVER and OVER again THE WORDS that will COMBAT the CHARACTER WEAKNESS. The word 'MEDITATE', means speaking over and over again, the same thing, i.e. REPEAT the SAME sentences, words or

phrases over and over again.

Let us now go over the CHARACTER FAILINGS and see how they can be ELIMINATED.

1) IDLESNESS, SLOTH, NEGLECT OF DUTY.

We have just seen that ministers of the Gospel are supposed to be MEDITATING on GOD'S COMMANDMENTS day and night. MEDITATION itself is a commandment. As to the DURATION of the meditation – it must be DAY and NIGHT.

However, very often, from the pulpit, you will hear ministers talking about their favourite soccer team, how they won the match last night etc, etc. Basically, they are informing the congregation that they were DISOBEYING GOD'S WORD. The commandment says, '...DAY and NIGHT...'. The fact that they had time to be watching TV, means that they were being SLOTHFUL and INDOLENT. They were BUSY NEGLECTING their DUTY of MEDITATING DAY and NIGHT. What

should they have been meditating on? Try meditating on the following words:

I LOVE GOD. I LOVE EVERYONE. I HATE SIN. I LOVE READING MATTHEWS, 2 HOURS DAILY.

The word MATTHEW above, refers to the Matthew Henry's Commentary of the Bible. I'm referring to an electronic copy, either in the EPUB or AZW3 format, which contains the FULL biblical text, and can be

read on either a Kobo or Kindle ereader device.

A person can accomplish 2 things at once, by SIMULTANEOUSLY reading the Matthew Henry's commentary, and saying the above words. The SPOKEN WORDS still have the effect of PROGRAMMING THE HUMAN SPIRIT even when one is not directly thinking on them. They will STRENGTHEN YOUR WILL-POWER to read the Matthew Henry's Commentary, which you as a Gospel Minister should

be doing. Remember, SLOTH and IDLENESS is a DAMNABLE SIN (Note the ffw verses especially Matt 25:26-30)

Pro 18:9 He also that is **slothful in his work** is brother to him that is a great waster.

Pro 26:14 As the door turneth upon his hinges, so doth the **slothful** upon his bed.

Rom 12:11 Not **slothful** in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;

Heb 6:12 That ye be not **slothful**, but followers of

them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

Mat 25:26 His lord answered and said unto him, ***Thou* wicked and slothful servant**, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: Mat 25:27 Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and *then* at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. Mat 25:28 Take therefore the talent from

him, and give *it* unto him which hath ten talents. Mat 25:29 For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. Mat 25:30 And **cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.**

2) STUMBLING BLOCKS.

We can see that David's STUMBLING BLOCK was

that he had a VERY HIGH ROOF, from which he could look down into the courtyards of the people all him. Consequently, he could even view people having a bath, or see them naked. If sexual weakness is your weakness, then you should avoid INTERNET ACCESS, use a non-smart cellphone that has no internet access, avoid certain television programs etc. Personally I would recommend not having a television at all, simply for the purpose of avoiding the temptation to be LAZY. If I owned a TV, I wouldn't be

writing this right now. I most probably would be watching some television program. TELEVISION leads to LAZINESS. Most Gospel ministers hardly know anything about the Bible, but ask them about some television movie, or sporting character, and they'll be able to give you an entire running commentary about it. Now if SEXUAL WEAKNESS is your WEAKNESS, then you may have to replace the sentence, I HATE SIN, with words that are MORE PRECISE. The word SIN is an IMPRECISE,

ABSTRACT noun that may not be able to effectively capture the POWERFUL SEXUAL EMOTIONS in its net. If you are UNMARRIED, try the following words:

I HATE ATTRACTIVE FEELINGS. I HATE BODIES.

If you are married, use the following words instead:

I HATE NON-WIFE SEXUAL FEELINGS.

If you are tempted to watch pornographic material, try the following words:

I HATE PORN.

So, just to clarify, if sexual weakness is your weakness, and you are unmarried (and have no girlfriend), then say the following words, over and over again, while reading the Matthew Henry's Commentary:

I LOVE GOD. I LOVE EVERYONE. I HATE ATTRACTIVE FEELINGS, I HATE BODIES. I LOVE READING MATTHEWS 4 HOURS DAILY.

If you are are unmarried (but have a fiance, whom you intend to marry some

time in the future), then use the following words instead:

I LOVE GOD. I LOVE OTHERS. I HATE SEXUAL FEELINGS NOW. I LOVE READING MATTHEWS 4 HOURS DAILY.

If you are are married, then use the following words instead:

I LOVE GOD. I LOVE OTHERS. I HATE NON-WIFE SEXUAL FEELINGS. I LOVE READING MATTHEWS 4 HOURS DAILY.

Now lets deal with the 4th character failing.

4) PRIDE, VANITY, and VAINGLORY.

If you have a tendency towards showmanship, pride and vanity, try repeating the following words over and over again while SIMULTANEOUSLY reading the Matthew Henry's Commentary

I LOVE GOD. I LOVE OTHERS. I HATE SIN. I LOVE READING MATTHEWS. ONLY GOD IS GREAT.

Next, we deal with the vice of greed and covetousness.

5) GREED and COVETOUSNESS.

Ministers of the Gospel can VALUE MONEY more highly than they ought to, and it can LEAD TO CATASTROPHIC CONSEQUENCES. Judas Iscariot, is a character that we all are familiar with. He was resentful of the money that was spent on Christ (John 12:6), and to recover his losses, he decided to betray Christ for 30 pieces of silver. Ministers of the Gospel, must have

complete integrity when dealing with money. If you have an INORDINATE LOVE FOR MONEY, use the following words:

I LOVE GOD. I LOVE OTHERS. I HATE SIN. I HATE MONEY. I LOVE READING MATTHEWS.

6) UNFORGIVENESS.

We've been already dealing with this CHARACTER WEAKNESS all along. The sentence:

I LOVE EVERYONE, should deal with a tendency towards unforgiveness.

7) GULLIBILITY, INABILITY or UNWILLINGNESS to EVALUATE or TEST the spirits.

Regarding the above, all the above WORDS, COLLECTIVELY will help. If a person has NO CHARACTER WEAKNESSES, then theoretically, a person should be able to ESCAPE BEING DECEIVED. Such person's are called 'the VERY ELECT'

Mat 24:24 For there shall arise FALSE Christs, and FALSE prophets, and shall

shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the VERY ELECT.

A person that is TOTALLY COMMITTED TO BEING RIGHTEOUS, and COMMITTED to COMPLETE OBEDIENCE, should be able to know when they are being deceived.

Joh 7:17 If any man WILL DO HIS WILL, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.

The above method is the OLD TESTAMENT method of ACHIEVING RIGHTEOUSNESS and is APPLICABLE to both Christians and non-Christians (Orthodox Jews). The NEW TESTAMENT method of achieving RIGHTEOUSNESS involves having a PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP, and FAITH and TRUST in the LORD JESUS CHRIST, and the EMPOWERING of the Human FREE-WILL by the Holy Spirit ACHIEVES RIGHTEOUSNESS. That is

applicable to Christians only. I won't be dealing with that. That your'll should already know. To summarize:

In the OLD TESTAMENT, WILL-POWER is STRENGTHENED by LAW MEDITATIONS. In the NEW TESTAMENT, WILL-POWER is STRENGTHENED by the HOLY SPIRIT through FAITH CONFESSIONS and PRAYERS FOR DELIVERANCE and SALVATION based on Christ's Atonement. In both cases HUMAN WILL-

POWER is ALWAYS FREE. God never violates human FREE-WILL except in a few very SPECIAL CASES, and even then, it never DETERMINES a person's ETERNAL DESTINY.

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THE END

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